

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

----- X

TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

----- X

March 25, 2015
Start: 10:17 a.m.
Recess: 6:06 p.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers - City Hall

B E F O R E: Daniel Dromm
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Vincent J. Gentile
Daniel R. Garodnick
Margaret S. Chin
Stephen T. Levin
Deborah L. Rose
Mark S. Weprin
Jumaane D. Williams
Ben Kallos
Andy L. King
Inez D. Barron
Chaim M. Deutsch
Mark Levine
Alan N. Maisel
Antonio Reynoso
Mark Treyger

A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Carmen Farina

Department of Education Chancellor

Ray Orlando

Department of Education Chief Financial Officer

Sophia Pappas

Department of Education Division of Early
Childhood Education

Lorraine Grillo

President of School Construction Authority

Elizabeth Rose

Deputy Chancellor Division of Operations at
Department of Education

Ling Tan

Executive Director for Capital and Reimbursable
Program for Department of Education

Evelyn DeJesus

Vice President for Education Policy at United
Federation of Teachers

Jeremy Hoffman

United Federation of Teachers

Liz Accles

Community Food Advocates

Roshley Roy

Bushwick Food Council

A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Felicite Dambras

Bushwick Food Council

Simone Springer

Bushwick Food Council

Nafestia Caleb

Bushwick Food Council

Aminata Abudugarama [sp?]

Bushwick Food Council

Jannay Yaskins [sp?]

Citywide Council on High Schools

Christina Fernandez

Pediatrician

Alleyne Hughley

President of Citywide Council on High Schools

Maggie Moroff

Arise Coalition

Randi Levine

Advocates for Children

Jane Heaphy

Learning Leaders

Maria Bautista

Alliance for Quality Education

A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Felicia Alexander
Coalition for Educational Justice

Natasha Capers
Coalition for Educational Justice

Erin George
New York Lawyers for Public Interest

Alexis Henry
Citizens Committee for Children

Lisa Levy
NYC Coalition Against Hunger

Janet Poppendieck
New York City Food Policy

Barbara Harris
Granny Peace Brigade

Sarah Fajardo
Coalition for Asian American Children and
Families

Ariana Jenkins
Union Settlement

Diamond Rivera
Union Settlement

Nina Dastur

Director of Policy and Advocacy at Union
Settlement

A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Randi Herman
Council for Supervisors and Administrators

Donald Nesbit
Local 372

Casey Foster
Urban Youth Collaborative

Matthew Evans
Urban Youth Collaborative

Onyx Walker
Urban Youth Collaborative

Latrell Stone
Urban Youth Collaborative

Miltyana Holdib [sp?]
Urban Youth Collaborative

Julian Thompson
Urban Youth Collaborative

Wendy Chapman
Build Schools Now

Max Ahmed
New York Immigration Coalition

Eric Pryor
Center for Arts and Education

A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Beth Broderick
Center for Court Innovation

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: That was a fun start of the day, right?

UNIDENTIFIED: Ladies and gentleman, at this time, make sure all electronic devices are set to vibrate. If you wish to testify, see the Sergeant at Arms and fill out a witness slip. Thank you for your cooperation.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: [gavel] Good morning. My name is Council Member Daniel Dromm and I'm Chair of the Education Committee, and let me just start off by saying a little something. I don't really appreciate when students are used in an inappropriate manner, whether it's done here in the City Council or whether it's done in Albany, and there are ways for people to address issues of concern, and that is by filling out a form and handing it into the Sergeant at Arms or holding a press conference before this hearing, but this hearing is being held so that everybody can have an opportunity to say what they feel about certain issues, and I feel that the way that it was done prior to the opening of the hearing today was just totally inappropriate. So, I'm going to start off on that note. But anyway, good morning and welcome to Fiscal 2016 Preliminary Budget Hearing

on the Department of Education in Fiscal Year 2015, Preliminary Mayor's Management Report. Today, we'll be hearing from the DOE's Chancellor, Chancellor Carmen Farina, followed by testimony from unions, parents, advocates, students and others who wish to testify in front of the Council. The Department of Education's Fiscal 2016 Preliminary Budget totals 21.59 billion dollars which represents nearly 30 percent of the city's 77.7 billion dollar budget. This year's budget is 839 million more than Fiscal 2015 adopted budget. The increase is largely due to collective bargaining costs, charter school tuition payments, the Renewal Schools Initiative, UPK, and annual incremental increases. Collective bargaining totals 506.4 million dollars in Fiscal 2016 according to the Administration. The DOE is 98 percent complete with the union agreement. Another 144 million is growth and funding for charter schools next year, which does not take into account potential costs of new charter schools that will open this fall. The Administration's laudable Renewal School's Initiative increases the DOE's budget by 30.7 million in Fiscal 2015 with the expectation the Executive Budget will contain further increases for Fiscal 2016 and in the

out years. Finally, UPK continues to be a priority of this city, and the budget show the additional funding from the state for UPK. While the overall budget of the DOE continues to grow, there is concern that this funding is not trickling down to the classrooms. How are students gaining from these increases? Are their classes smaller? Is there additional funding for supplies and new innovative technological advances in the classroom? Do they have the fields and gyms they're entitled to so they can become high achievers? As a former educator, I know the value of class size and what it can mean for a child's educational attainment. The Council has stood firm with the Mayor in our demand for funding from the state as it is legally obligated to provide as based on the campaign for fiscal equity. We will continue to relentlessly fight for our funding, because I like other educators know, our students deserve it. We hope the DOE will continue the fight to gain equity in our schools as well. This leads me to my next hope for today, that we can have an honest conversation about equity for our students. Every student, regardless of neighborhood, family income, race, gender identity, and learning abilities should

have access to a sound education. The disparities in grade advancement, reading and math proficiencies and graduation rates must end. The Education Committee has held oversight hearings on diversity in enrollment, English language learners and soon on school discipline in an effort to ensure that as a city we are preparing our students and giving them the opportunity to become successful adults. We cannot wait on the State to get us there. We have to find creative ways to generate more revenue and be as efficient as possible. Today, we want to examine the DOE's budget in areas like the Fair Student Funding Formula, Medicaid revenue and technology spending to further clarify our areas of concern. While we applaud the Chancellor on all the efforts toward creating more equitable schools with the shift in superintendent control and borough field support officers, the Council also wants to make sure the community and the Council are involved in every step of the way. There should be real and tangible parental engagement for all communities, dedicated staff to support our lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender student population, and a true investment in language access services so all New Yorkers can be

engaged in their child's education. Before I will conclude, I'd like to thank the staff of my committee who have worked tirelessly on this hearing, and I think we have done five education hearings in the last six weeks. I'm very proud of the work that this committee has done, and I'd like to thank Nora Yaya [sp?], Medina Nitsamitine [sp?], Asia Schamburg [sp?], Jan Atwell, Joan Povolmi [sp?], and Regina Pereta-Ryan [sp?] for the work that they have done in preparation for this hearing. I'd also like to introduce my colleagues who have joined us this morning, and I want to thank everyone again as we welcome the Chancellor's testimony. So to my right we have Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez from Manhattan, Council Member Mark Weprin from Queens, Council Member Mark Treyger from Brooklyn, and I know that we will be joined by other Council Members as well, and I'd also like to announce that we've been joined by a special guest, Comptroller John Lieu who is here today in his role as a professor with CUNY Finance students. So let's give them a little bit of a round of applause and welcome them as well.

[applause]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you, Comptroller for being here. It's good to see you as always. And I guess with that I'm going to swear in our Chancellor and Mr. Orlando. Would you raise your right hand, please? Do you solemnly swear or affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth and to answer Council Member questions honestly? Thank you. And Chancellor, would you begin? I think the mic is not on. Let me just--

CHANCELLOR FARINA: That always helps.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: There you go.

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Good morning, Chair Dromm and all members of the City Council Education Committee here today. Thank you for the opportunity to discuss Mayor de Blasio's proposed Fiscal Year 2016 Preliminary Expense Budget as it relates to the New York City DOE and our public schools. I am joined by Ray Orlando, DOE's Chief Financial Officer. I would like to begin by thanking Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, Education Committee Chair Danny Dromm and all members of the City Council for your strong partnership and support over this past year. Together, we have truly made a difference in the lives of our school communities. With your support,

we have already advanced several key initiatives, including the historic implementation of Pre-K for All and after school programs for middle school students. With the 294 million dollars invested this year, our youngest learners are getting an early start developing language and number skills that will serve as a strong foundation for academic success, approximately 1,700 New York City public schools. Early Childhood Centers in charter schools, next September, in the second year of our Pre-K for All Expansion, we will provide a seat for every four year old in the city. Families are excited about this opportunity, and as of this past Monday during the first week of enrollment, more than 37,000 families signed up for Pre-K for All. I will tell you that one of my favorite things as Chancellor is visiting these Pre-K sites both in public schools and in the community based organizations, and they have been a total wonder to me in terms of now the vocabulary development spreading, and in terms the joy that the kids express in class. Similarly, this year, the city embarked on the largest ever expansion of after school offerings for middle school students. We are providing enriching programming for over 90,000

middle school students in traditional school settings and community based centers across the city. Our after schools not only help improve academic performance, they foster a sense of community at a critical time in the child's development. I was in a middle school recently where they have a band that practices five days a week after school, and then now is in a national competition. Those are the kinds of things we want to see in all our schools. Over the past 15 months we have been working to transform the school system. We have implemented a number of reforms to improve instruction, streamline school support and accountability and provide students with both the academic and the non-academic supports to help them succeed. I would like to highlight some of our accomplishments. Last year, we introduced the framework for great schools, a bold innovative research based capacity framework for guiding and measuring school quality. This framework identifies six essential elements for continual school improvement, rigorous instruction, a supportive environment, collaborative teachers, effective leadership, strong family community ties, which I know is a major emphasis of the Council, and a

1 culture of continuous learning and trust. To ensure
2 that schools are receiving support that are better
3 aligned to the framework for great schools, last fall
4 we announced structural changes to the way we will
5 align support and supervision for our schools,
6 beginning in the 2015/2016 year. We are streamlining
7 the school's support system to create equity and more
8 efficient lines of communication between our city
9 schools and families. In our new geographically
10 based support structure, there are four core
11 components, superintendents, borough field support
12 centers, central division, and affinity groups.
13 Under this structure, superintendents will supervise,
14 support and advocate for schools in their district to
15 ensure student achievement goals are met and will
16 work with the local community to support family
17 engagement and in the learning process. I have to be
18 honest and say that to me, this is one of the most
19 important things we've done. To have superintendents
20 that understand their communities and are held
21 accountable for the success of those schools is quite
22 different than what's been happening in the last few
23 years, and people now also know the name of the
24 people they can call if they have a question or any
25

kind of concerns. To facilitate these reforms, all district and high school superintendents had to reapply for their positions this summer in accordance with new criteria to ensure that all new superintendents have at least 10 years of pedagogical experience, including these three as a principle. This rigorous process required them to have a demonstrability to raise student achievement as well as engage families. We recently announced our seven new borough directors. Each director will manage a team of deputies who will collectively provide a set of integrated services to schools based on their individual needs. Teaching and Learning will be one department. Finance and Human Resources will be another department. Operations will be a department. Student Services, Special Education and English Language Learners will be their own department, each under a Borough Superintendent. Our goal is to provide differentiation at every level in order to create strong support for schools. The allocation of staff across each borough office will be done according to school needs to ensure equity across all geographic areas, not according to specific schools. For example, the Bronx may have more English language

1 learner specialists than another center in order to
2 best serve its population. Brooklyn and Queens will
3 have two borough centers due to the higher number of
4 students in each of these boroughs. These structural
5 changes will give us the tools we need to drive
6 improvement across the system and ultimately help
7 each child fulfill his or her potential as an active
8 member of our city. We're also targeting
9 unprecedented resources to support our most
10 challenged schools. We have created 128 new
11 community schools, including all of them in renewal
12 schools. As part of this Administration's commitment
13 to ensure that all our students receive a quality
14 education regardless of the background, family income
15 or zip code. We recently identified 94 city schools
16 as Renewal Schools. We are investing 150 million
17 dollars in the School Renewal Program, a multiyear
18 initiative to turn around struggling schools. Over
19 the next three years we will work intensely with each
20 Renewal School's community to establish clear goals,
21 provide a core set of interventions and hold them
22 accountable for rapid improvement. To oversee this
23 effort, I have appointed Aimee Horowitz as Executive
24 Superintendent for the School Renewal Program. Aimee

brings to this role tremendous experience and a record of success in turning around struggling schools and raising student achievement. Most recently she served as superintendent for Staten Island high schools and 14 Renewal Schools. With Aimee's support and the support of her team, borough based directors of Renewal Schools, these schools will provide an extra hour each day of extended instruction and could offer additional after school weekend and summer learning opportunities as needed. Moreover, each will receive additional resources for academic intervention and professional development to create better learning environment for students. Each Renewal School will also transform into a community school, knitting together new services that support both students and their families. In addition, each Renewal School will perform a needs assessment across all six elements of the framework for grade schools to identify key areas for additional resources and develop a school renewal plan. Each school must meet the concrete milestones defined in their respective school renewal plan as well as progress on targeted elements of the framework for grade schools. Just yesterday I

visited two Renewal Schools and I will tell you that those principals are doing an unbelievable amount of efforts in just a very short period of time. Every member of my leadership team is visiting two to three Renewal Schools per week and we expect to have a really good focus on these schools as we go forward. The arts have a power to transform the academic social and emotional lives our students so we invested 23 million to expand arts education. All students should have access to robust instruction in dance, drama, music, and the visual arts. This funding is being used to support certified arts teachers in low arts middle and high schools and arts programs providing collaboration with cultural institution in arts education organizations. These includes arts partnership programs for English language learners and students with disability, professional development resources for art teachers and workshops for families among other initiatives. We also lifted the hiring freeze, which has resulted in additional 300 certified arts educators working in our schools this year. To address the need of our ELLs, we will open 40 new dual language and 10 transitional bilingual education programs throughout

the city next year. Similarly, we are commitment to expanding bilingual program options for ELLs. We will continue to support schools in offering new programs and strengthening existing programs across elementary, middle and high school grades to meet the needs of each students and school community. As part of our goal to ensure that New York City students are prepared for careers in the 21st century economy, we continue to strengthen our existing career and technical education in workforce readiness programs to provide more work based learning and paid internship opportunities for students. On Monday we announced that 3.2 million dollar grants from the General Electric Foundation that will support an innovative CTE pilot program designed to strengthen teaching and learning practices at 10 schools. It will also support STEM training for 200 schools through brand new multiday STEM institutes as well as STEM inventory project to identify and share strong STEM practices across DOE schools. One hundred schools will attend the first STEM institute this spring. I invite any of you who wish to attend. I will give you the dates. Including six Renewal Schools that can leverage this experience to help

drive improvement in teaching and student outcomes.

I know Speaker Mark-Viverito and the Council share

our commitment to this work, and I look forward to

partnering with you to provide our students with even

more opportunities. With generous funding from the

City Council this year, we have been able to provide

additional restorative justice program in our schools

and create approximately 100 new sports teams in

small schools, which historically have not had many

teams. City Council funding has also enabled us to

expand the Universal Lunch Program to all 291 middle

schools serving grades six to eight. The goals of the

programs are to improve the overall atmosphere and

experience for students in our cafeterias, reduce the

stigma of qualifying for free lunch and encourage

more students to eat healthy and nutritious meals in

our school. As part of this initiative, seven

schools were selected to serve as pilots to continue

to develop best practices to be models for the rest

of the city. There has been a 6.4 percent increase

in the lunch participation rate in the middle

schools. We are taking this year to encourage

students to eat school food prepared meals and we

are currently studying the cost implications of

expanding the program. The Mayor's Fiscal 2016 Preliminary Budget includes an allocation of approximately 21.6 billion in operating funds, another 5.5 billion for education related pension and debt service funds. Our funding is a combination of city, state and federal dollars with city tax levy dollars making up the largest share at 56 percent, state dollars at 38 percent and federal dollars at six percent. The Mayor's proposed budget continues to make unprecedented investments in education. The Preliminary Budget includes funding for the School Renewal Program, literacy intervention teams, language access services for limited English speaking parents, and the installation of door alarms to help keep our youngest and most vulnerable students safe. It is critical that we build student's literacy skills in the early grades and provide them with a strong literacy foundation to have successful academic careers. DOE's Division of Specialized Instruction and Student Support in collaboration with our Division of Teaching and Learning is developing a new Literacy Intervention Program to improve collaboration between classroom teachers, reading specialists, school leadership in next year in the

borough offices. We recognize that families are key partners in achieving academic excellence for their children, and parent engagement continues to be a critical element embedded in all our reforms. As you are aware, community education council elections are now underway. This year we increased the number of applicants to serve on CEC's by 561 for a total of 1,290, and I hope you will encourage all eligible parents to vote in the upcoming elections. Data from the Mayor's Preliminary Management Report show that parent-teacher conference attendance increased by 42 percent this year and phone consultations increased by eight percent compared to the same period last year. A lot of this also has to do with our emphasis on Tuesdays being committed for teachers to work with parents. Its part of the contract that we signed, and also, part of this is that we have asked many schools to do student lead conferences where the students take part in sharing their information with their parents. As you aware, since 2009, the State has not met its court ordered obligations under the Campaign for Fiscal Equity lawsuit. This year alone New York City public school students will be shortchanged some 2.6 billion in state education

1 funds. While we have been able to make critical
2 investments in the school system with adequate
3 funding from the state, we'd be able to reduce class
4 size as well as hire more arts teachers and guidance
5 counselors. While we are pleased with our progress,
6 we know we have a lot of hard work ahead. I look
7 forward to my continued work with the City Council on
8 behalf of our 1.1 million students and their
9 families. Only through collaboration can we create a
10 world class education system in which every student
11 has the opportunity to succeed. Thank you for the
12 opportunity to testify before you. We are happy to
13 answer any questions you may have.

14
15 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much,
16 Chancellor. I just, before we go to questioning,
17 want to announce that we've been joined by Council
18 Member Debbie Rose, Council Member Margaret Chin,
19 Council Member Mark Levine, Council Member Alan
20 Maisel was here, Council Member Crowley, and I think
21 that's it as far as people who have joined us. So let
22 me just go to some questioning. I noticed that in
23 your testimony, Chancellor, you mentioned that state
24 dollars are 38 percent of the overall budget and that
25 federal dollars are approximately six percent. The

1 state--the Governor has proposed I think somewhere in
2 the area of about 348 million dollars in additional
3 funding. If the packages that he's tied to the
4 budget in terms of other issues are not also passed
5 along with the budget and would we be able to count
6 on that 38 percent if the state is only giving us the
7 348 million dollars or do we actually need a lot more
8 than that to meet that 38 percent?
9

10 RAY ORLANDO: Hi, is this on? Can you
11 guys hear me?

12 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Yeah. And just
13 identify yourself, too, so--

14 RAY ORLANDO: [interposing] Sure. Hi, I'm
15 Ray Orlando. I'm the Chief Financial Officer of the
16 New York City Department of Education. Good morning.
17 The Preliminary Budget published by the city is the
18 basis of those calculations. So, in the event that
19 nothing else changes and state aid increased, that
20 percentage would increase, if you see what I'm
21 saying.

22 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: The percentage would
23 increase?

24 RAY ORLANDO: Yeah, if the--if we--
25

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: [interposing] If we got more.

RAY ORLANDO: If we got more state aid and nothing else changed, then the percentage of state aid would in our total budget would increase.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So you're saying the 348 million that the Governor has proposed would increase?

RAY ORLANDO: Would be in addition to what's in the Preliminary Budget, which is the basis of the calculation.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, and if there was an additional increase above the 348 million, if it was raised to what the Assembly is talking about, for example, 1.8, I think, billion, it would--

RAY ORLANDO: [interposing] That would--

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: increase by that much as well.

RAY ORLANDO: also change.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So that just shows, I think in my opinion, how desperately needed that funding is to support our budget down here at this level as well. And then in terms of the six percent with the federal dollars, I know that we have, or I

1 think we have seen a little bit of a drop in the
2 number of Title One students in the system. Does
3 that six percent reflect that drop, and is there
4 anything we can do about that, and how is that figure
5 gotten at?

7 RAY ORLANDO: Sure. The six percent
8 doesn't actually reflect the decrease that we're
9 forecasting for the upcoming year, because those
10 percentages are based on the current year, if you see
11 what I'm saying. So, the fact that Title One dollars
12 are falling to New York City is largely due to the
13 fact that the economy locally in New York City is
14 stronger than the economy in the state of New York.
15 If you see--we in the city are sort of economically
16 doing better. So given that the pot itself is fixed
17 or shrinking, we're getting less of the pie because
18 it's distributed based on how you're doing basically.
19 And we're doing a--

20 CHANCELLOR FARINA: [interposing] And
21 gentrification is hitting certain parts of the city
22 in a very high way, so that as schools who had a
23 majority of free lunch students now are moving away
24 from that, it's really effecting those numbers quite
25 seriously in some places.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Do you know the figure from last year in terms of the percentage of federal dollars that came in. Is there a difference in that percentage?

RAY ORLANDO: Yeah, at this time of year, there's typically a slight difference. We've been hovering I'd say at about eight or nine percent of our total budget funded by federal dollars, and what happens is during the year as the year progresses a lot of federal aid that comes to us for grants and other things that occur during the year, and we wait until that money shows up to move it into the budget. SO I expect by the end of this year, we'll probably be in a similar eight or nine percentage place as opposed to the six we're kind of at as we move more money in over the next few months.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: That does concern us-

-

RAY ORLANDO: [interposing] But it's certainly not growing.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Right. Is there a way also because much of the federal dollars is based on student lunch applications that we can increase

those applications coming in to accurately reflect the students that we're serving?

CHANCELLOR FARINA: We have done a very, very good job of collecting the student lunch forms. The reality is that in terms of the eligibility for that, it's actually lessening as we go into different schools.

RAY ORLANDO: As the Chancellor mentioned, it becomes a distributional issue, which is school A in a gentrifying neighborhood might not be collecting the forms and school B may, and it's sort of effects how the distribution of the funds once we actually get the total funds and redistribute them amongst the schools. There's also, you know, issues that arise from the distribution of the funds to each individual school. So, if there were to be more Title One money, that would be helpful, but giving the fixed and shrinking nature of Title One funds sort of nationally and to us specifically, it becomes--the distributional problems get exacerbated, because more people are fighting over less money, if you pardon the analogy.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Well, adequate constitutionally guaranteed funding for our students

1 is obviously of mutual concern to both this committee
2 and to the department, and that's something that we
3 look forward to continuing to fight with you together
4 on on both the state and the federal level as we move
5 forward. And there may be other questions on that as
6 well, but I have some other questions in other areas
7 that I want to go to at this point. I know that
8 recently some references were made to looking at some
9 of the challenging schools in a similar way to
10 CompStat has being used in the Police Department.
11 Have you actually come up with a system to do that?
12 Are you using that? What does that actually look
13 like?

14
15 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Well, I want to very
16 clear that there is a difference between, you know,
17 incidents and when you're developing school plans.
18 SO what we're really doing is on a weekly basis
19 reviewing things such as student attendance, which we
20 know is actually one of the single biggest things
21 that we have across every Renewal School, lack of
22 good attendance. So, certainly we're monitoring
23 attendance on a weekly basis. We're monitoring the
24 improvement. We're monitoring what principals are
25 doing to ensure that parents understand the

1
2 seriousness of that. That's one of the things that
3 we're looking on weekly basis. Another thing that
4 we're looking at a weekly basis is what is the amount
5 of time that principals are spending on professional
6 development for teachers? What are the programs that
7 are being put in? What are the after school programs
8 that are being put in in each of the Renewal Schools
9 that we feel will improve the academics? For
10 example, yesterday in one of the schools I went to
11 visit, I suggested to the principal that she bring in
12 an academic intervention service that she wasn't
13 aware of. So the kind of looking that we're looking
14 on a week to week basis is what is every school--what
15 should every school have? After school, aside of the
16 academies, more parent involvement, and that's the
17 kind of educational CompStat that we're looking at.

18 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So is that being done
19 now in the 94 Renewal Schools or is that being done
20 across the board in many of the schools throughout
21 the system?

22 CHANCELLOR FARINA: It's being done in
23 the 94 Renewal Schools, but in terms of student
24 attendance, we're asking all principals across the
25 city to keep a much closer eye on attendance as one

1 of the overall things that makes the school
2 successful. The other things that we're asking
3 everybody to do is to make sure that they have
4 functioning SLT's. In every school, the parent
5 involvement is not just who comes to a PTA, but how
6 involved the parents are making school specific
7 decisions. So for example, before a community
8 partner is elected, when we have community schools,
9 the SLT has to vote along with the principal for that
10 particular CBO to come into the school. So there are
11 certain things we're doing citywide, but those are
12 two that we're doing very specifically. And also one
13 of the things we're asking principals to look at is
14 what are the percentage of ineffective teachers that
15 they have in their schools, obviously with an
16 emphasis on Renewal Schools, but across the board.

18 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So let me go, since
19 you brought it up, to the piece on parental
20 engagement as well. What are the future plans for
21 the DOE in terms of increasing parental engagement?
22 I use that word rather than even parental
23 involvement, because I think engagement is different
24 than involvement in the sense that engagement means
25 true input into the operations of a school versus--

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

1 in a Renewal School who's coming to Saturday
2 academies, why not also use the school on Saturdays
3 for parents to have workshops. Parents have asked
4 for more workshops and to have book clubs, to have
5 writing classes. So, there's a lot of things, but
6 it's got to be school by school what parents want.
7 We're also looking at parent mentoring. We have
8 parents in a school that have older kids. Mentor new
9 parents coming in, particularly with the multiple
10 languages that we have in New York City and also many
11 parents who are coming from cultures that may be very
12 different than what they're experiencing in New York
13 City. Having parents of similar cultures become
14 mentors to parents in the same building, and share
15 things like, you know, this is how they do it here.
16 This is what the homework policy is in this school.
17 This is how you talk to a teacher. I just did a
18 workshop of a group of parents, and I said, you know,
19 always start with a compliment. Don't say, "My kid
20 doesn't like coming to school." Say, "Oh, you know,
21 she loves the way you dress or how you do this." And
22 then figure out what to do. So, I think parent
23 involvement to me and engagement is anything that
24 parents want that school to be able to do. In some
25

1 schools parents have asked for cooking classes, and
2 we've now made it possible to use school kitchens
3 for, you know, supervised classes for that. So, I
4 think there's no limit to what parents can do, but
5 it's got to be in a school by school basis, and also
6 this year we did a major retraining of school
7 leadership teams, and also I think the fact that you
8 see how many people signed up to stay on CEC's I
9 think the word is out there that, you know, play an
10 important role, because people are going to be
11 listening to you.

13 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Is there any
14 additional funding going to be put into parental
15 engagement?

16 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Specifically, as
17 that, no. I think one of the things that we ask for
18 is more--they want more access. And remember, under
19 a superintendent there's a DFA and a liaison. So
20 there's already in every district in the city a
21 specific person just for parent issues. And then we
22 have a whole parent engagement here at the tweed
23 [sic] level, and then there will be something that's
24 also going to be done under Mariano Gusman [sp?] who
25 is going to supervise the boroughs.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And what about parent coordinators? I know that there's still many schools without parent coordinators. What is the--what are you looking at toward doing in regard to that?

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Well, this year--

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: [interposing] In the future.

CHANCELLOR FARINA: we re-instituted professional development for parent coordinators. They hadn't been had any training at all, many, many years. And what we did is we selected what they wanted to know more of. So, for example, we took them to cultural institutions and actually exposed them to what kind of trips could be held at a cultural institution that they could then take groups of parents too by themselves. The Hall of Science in Queens, for example, gave everybody who attended over 100, close to 200, parent coordinators three tickets so that they could come back with groups of parents. We want to do a lot more of this this year going forward. Also, parent coordinators had an all day workshop on STEM, how to use technology that they could then train parents in. We spent more money on training parent coordinators to do a better job.

1
2 Parent coordinators in most schools, they do have
3 them. I think what we're looking for for next year is
4 to make their training more consistent so they're
5 used more effectively across all schools versus just
6 what an individual school wants to do with their
7 specific parent coordinator.

8 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: What about in the high
9 schools, because I think that's where we have the
10 shortage of the parent coordinators? Is there any--

11 CHANCELLOR FARINA: [interposing] Well,
12 that's--

13 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: plans for the future
14 to hire more?

15 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Because in high
16 schools is where the principals were given exemptions
17 in the past not to hire parent coordinators. And you
18 know, I still feel it has to be a principal decision,
19 but I think particularly in high school, we meet with
20 the High School Council. Some of their concerns are
21 more specifically on more guidance services in the
22 high schools, particularly guidance towards college
23 or course readiness. So, I think it's, you know, if
24 there's limited funding, particularly in a lot of our
25

small high schools, where do you put the money more effectively?

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Well, when I was a teacher, I would say to parents it's nice when they come to conferences when they're young, but you have to follow them through all the way through their school career, and I think having parent coordinators in the high school level is also a very important issues, and I would urge you to continue to look at that and possible avenues for funding for that moving forward. Charter schools, and then I'm going to turn it over to my colleagues. It's projected that it's going to cost 1.4 billion dollars in 2016 and that's 144 million dollar increase over the current Fiscal Year. This growth, however, does not take into effect, into account that the number of charter school that will open in the fall. Do you have an estimate on what the cost for that would be? And also on the cost for rent moving forward. I have worked with some people on a very informal basis who said that the cost for rental of private space could reach as much as almost 200 million dollars a year if the existing charter schools were to either expand or

other ones were to open under the additional 25 allowable charters that are still available.

RAY ORLANDO: Hi. There are about approximately 200 charter schools currently, and it looks like there will be approximately 10 additional charter schools in the upcoming school year opening, and that doesn't include charter schools that are adding grades. Those are just new schools. So the increase that is in the budget currently for Fiscal Year 16 over Fiscal Year 15 includes both new expected schools and tuition growth. The number tends to fluctuate. It'll likely be updated for the executive budget in May as it becomes clearer over time. As you know, as you get closer to the date, certain--you get more information. So, sometimes a school you think is going to open decides to take a planning year instead, so the number kind of fluctuates. It sort of lands around this time of year, you know, just before the executive budget comes out, presumably late April, early May. So there'll be an updated figure then, and that will take into account all the best information we have. When we project looking forward what the enrollment's going to be, we use the most currently available data

1 we have, and that's going to be the--we pay charter
2 schools every--six times a year, so we use the fifth
3 payment that we make, because that's the most, that's
4 the closest to when we have to make the decision, and
5 that's the best information we have at this time.
6 But I don't know what that's the best information we
7 have at this time. But I don't know what that's
8 going to look like yet. I'll know better when we
9 publish the executive budget.

11 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Is there a set rate
12 at which we allow charter schools to rent private
13 space, a square footage rate for payments for rent?

14 RAY ORLANDO: Under the recently passed
15 law from last year, it doesn't take the rate into
16 account. There's a whole process as where charter
17 schools ask for space and we have to make a decision
18 about whether there's space available and such. It's
19 just we follow the law basically, but no, the law
20 doesn't include a specific like rate.

21 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So that's a very
22 interesting fact that they don't take that into
23 consideration because that could vary widely in terms
24 of what type of facility these schools are using or
25 renting or even who they're renting from, and I would

think that there could be a huge potential for taking advantage of the varying rates or amounts that would be willing to be paid for this space. Is that--

RAY ORLANDO: [interposing] There's a--

CHANCELLOR FARINA: [interposing] There's a process.

RAY ORLANDO: Yes, there's a--there is a limit on what we would paid. There isn't a limit on the rate per say, so the--in the event that a charter school decide to lease a private space, we can provide them with up to I believe the law says 20 percent of the tuition rate. So there's a limit on that. That's the limit, but that's independent of what they may choose to--

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: [interposing] To actually pay.

RAY ORLANDO: If you see what I'm saying.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Basically--

RAY ORLANDO: [interposing]

[cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: a foundation--

RAY ORLANDO: [interposing] If somebody-- exactly. Yeah, exactly.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Pay that. But the money that we do spend would be money that we could spend otherwise on our public school buildings am I right?

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Theoretically.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Theoretically. But importantly so because it technically could be used for that purpose. Alright, I've gone on. I want to give my colleagues an opportunity to ask some questions, and the first one, unless I have to announce anybody--yeah, we've been joined by Councilman Vincent Gentile from Brooklyn as well, Council Member Ben Kallos, and I think Council Member Andy King as well. I think I got everybody. Okay, good, alright. So we're going to hear questions now from Council Member Weprin followed by Council Member Rodriguez and then Treyger.

COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Oh, and Council Member Dan Garodnick as well.

COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: Chancellor, good morning. Just I have a few questions on some minor subjects. They talked about lunch and free lunches

and people eligible for a free lunch. A couple of years ago there was an issue where students who were not eligible for free lunch but weren't paying had built up tabs, very large. They were in arrears for a number of meals and DOE was serving meals. You know, they weren't denying a child a meal if the parents hadn't paid for a meal, and a couple years ago there was an effort to get the principals to try to recoup the people who are in arrears, and it caused a lot of headaches for the principals because they were told that if we don't recoup them, it's coming out of your budget. Now that was stopped, but it did make me wonder, like there are a lot of parents out there who are not eligible for free meals who could probably afford the \$1.50, whatever it is for a meal, but there wasn't a good way of them--sometimes out of laziness or other things. I know that I am on my lunchmoney.com, so it automatically subtracts so my daughter can have hot lunch when she wants, but it was frustrating for me that there were people who weren't paying at all, and they weren't even going to be forced to pay at the end. Is there an effort under way? I know we would like to see free lunches for everyone, or there's an effort, but in the

1
2 meantime, is there an effort you know of to make sure
3 we collect from the parents who--and that so the kids
4 aren't getting a free lunch who don't deserve it?

5 CHANCELLOR FARINA: I totally agree with
6 you, and you know, it just--it's not something I
7 thought of, but I certainly will go in and look into
8 it, because it seems to me that it's just common
9 sense, and it's not a topic that's come out from
10 principals, so I don't think people are in arrears. I
11 certainly don't feel they should pay it out of school
12 budgets.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: It was something I
14 was unaware of until that one policy that was for a
15 very brief time was talked about and I was getting
16 calls from my principals saying, "You know, I got
17 other things to do here than call every parent and
18 say, hey, you owe 16 bucks in lunches."

19 CHANCELLOR FARINA: No, absolutely. I'll
20 get back to you on this.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: Some owed a lot
22 more than that. Alright. I just was curious. I
23 hadn't heard anything about that, and that's probably
24 because they haven't been forced to do it, but it
25 would be a shame if the parents were not paying for

1 something they should be paying for. The other
2 question as far as budget goes, another thing that
3 came up around that same period of time was
4 principals who had--I don't know what we call those
5 budgets where they have money that's expendable to
6 buy things in the school--

8 CHANCELLOR FARINA: [interposing] Right.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: that particular
10 year, and I think it was the same chancellor
11 actually, the one that was here very briefly, who had
12 this policy where if a principal didn't spend their
13 money they lose it for that particular year. And so
14 principals were going on spending sprees to make sure
15 they use their money so they didn't lose it, and it
16 used to be you could roll over some of that money and
17 have more to spend when you might need it later. Has
18 that policy been changed?

19 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Oh, yes. You know, I
20 was a former principal. I believe roll over money is
21 something you do as a savings. So, for example, if I
22 as a principal wanted to have summer school and there
23 was money I had in my budget that I could save to
24 have a special program over the summer, I would want
25 to have the ability to roll over. So it'd definitely

not taking excess, whatever's left away from principals, because--

COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: [interposing]

Good.

CHANCELLOR FARINA: if they've done it to save for a rainy day, it just makes sense.

COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: Yeah, that's what I said. You know, I'm frustrated. I'm--I don't know. The happy me is not nearly as much fun as the angry me. I don't understand. I'm trying to find these things.

CHANCELLOR FARINA: I like you happy, so let's try to keep it that way.

COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: We're very--it's great that you're a former educator/principal/teacher/parent, all those things, because it really does make such a difference. Let me ask another question on community education councils. You talked about them briefly. One of the frustrations we had in the past too was that Community Education Council truly was not something that the former Administration even wanted in the first place. It was part of a negotiated deal with Albany when they got mayoral control. And because of

1 that, I think their role I always thought was
2 belittled a little bit, and it's one of the reasons
3 we had a very difficult time getting people to it's
4 on those boards is they really didn't have a lot to
5 do, and they didn't have much of a role to play, and
6 I was encouraged that--I know I got an automated
7 voicemail message on my machine asking if I want to
8 run for CEC and try to encourage people to run. Do
9 you also anticipate increasing the role they play in
10 the district?
11

12 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Yes, there are several
13 things we've done differently with the CEC's this
14 year. First of all, we meet with the CEC presidents,
15 which was not part of what we had to do. You know,
16 on Saturdays, we do it on purpose. It's almost a two
17 hour meeting. We meet every other month with them so
18 that we can have more deeper discussions, and we
19 bring to the table members of my team. I think Ray,
20 you met with them on budget. I want them to
21 understand what the budget process is. We brought
22 the facilities people to them. We brought the people
23 who helped work on the blueprint. We want their
24 input, and one of the things they've done this year
25 is anytime we've had facilities issues, they have

1 walked the buildings with us. The other thing is
2 that we're asking them when we're thinking about
3 making any changes and actually, we just worked with
4 Council Member Rodriguez on one of these with CEC on
5 an idea that he had about one of his schools, and we
6 brought the CEC president to the table who is very
7 excited about it. So, the answer is yes. We want the
8 CEC presidents to be part of the decision making. We
9 also want to hear from them what are the issues that-
10 -you know, every district has a different issue.
11 Wherever I go in the city, certain things, the
12 uniform, but you can always count on one thing that
13 you weren't expecting. So, I do listen to them. In
14 fact, we met with them last night again with the
15 CPAC's [sic] because we want to hear from both of
16 them, and particularly at this time of year when
17 we're talking about the state budget, we want them to
18 be the advocates for the kinds of things that we're
19 talking about today. So I believe, and again, we're
20 asking them what they want more information on and
21 what they want--last night their input was, and what
22 we think what they think is missing at the borough
23 office level. And we're going to be looking into
24 that.
25

COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: Great. And then the last thing I just want to bring up is a local concern. I'm not sure if it's a budget issue directly, but it's still out there, is Middle School 172 in Bellerose [sp?], which is in District 26, is got to be the top school in the whole city of New York is kids who don't match in the first round of high schools. Again, we had 30 something this year again, and I get a lot of these calls from parents freaking out. It's based in part because the way they try to do their choices. They want to stay local because it's hard to get around, and you know, apply to the same schools. I could talk about it. We need an intervention, and I'd like to figure out. I know there's talk about building new high schools out there in Eastern Queens, but we need intervention to try to figure out what would make these parents happy and maybe having someone come in and explain to them the best way to apply for schools and give them other options that they might be able to get to in unique ways, because 30 something parents, and they're all-- you know, you always feel terrible if that happens to you.

1
2 CHANCELLOR FARINA: I'll be honest with
3 you, this is something we have done. We have sent
4 people out--and I can stress enough that parents have
5 to make choices, not on where their child's best
6 friend is going, but what might be the best school
7 for their child. And somehow or other, we can't
8 always convince parents of that. And also, you know,
9 picking a school that's not where 100 percent of the
10 other people are going to apply just makes sense. I
11 think Queens has some phenomenal choices on high
12 schools. I do agree. We're thinking of more. But
13 the reality is I've gone to visit some high schools,
14 and I'm going to give a shout out to Jamaica or
15 Gateway for Sciences, that I would put my kid in that
16 school in a minute, and yet their enrollment doesn't,
17 you know. SO I think one of the things we have to do
18 is also celebrate schools that are doing a great job
19 that may be under the radar. So you're right, we can
20 do more to celebrate those schools.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: Maybe offline I
22 can meet with a member of your staff again--

23 CHANCELLOR FARINA: [interposing] Yeah.
24
25

COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: to go over like--I know what the problem is and but the solution needs to be discussed.

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Right. Okay.

COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, thank you very much. I just want to remind my colleagues we're on a five minute clock. Before I go to my next colleague, I just wanted to go back to ask a question about the capital plan amendment. We haven't gotten that, Chancellor. That was due on February 1st. It's almost two months late now. Can you explain to us why we have not received that? That's part of, an important part of our oversight here, and without that, it's difficult to do that.

RAY ORLANDO: Yes. I can tell you that as you all know, one of the vestibule [sic] parts from the change dating back many years is that the Department has its own five year capital plan that's off cycle from the city's capital planning process. This year is the city's ten year capital strategy year. The city updates its ten year capital strategy every other year as you guys know. So, in light of the work that the city is doing on the ten year

capital strategy, I think working with OMB and the Mayor's office and all agencies to address some of the issues around the ten year capital strategy, we've been working with them on that so that it all comes out together, and that's the source of the delay.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So how long will it take--

RAY ORLANDO: [interposing] Basically [sic].

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: before we get that? Because its two months already.

RAY ORLANDO: I would expect that they would be done with the ten year capital strategy planning process, probably in connection with the executive budget expected to come out next month. So, I would say shortly is the expectation.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. that is problematic for me, because I am charged with the responsibility of that oversight, and without that I just can't do the job that I feel I need to do with that, and I'm going to be bringing it up with Lorraine Grillo [sp?] when she comes in later on as well, because it just makes my job much more

difficult to be able to do. Okay, with that, we'll ask Council Member Rodriguez followed by Tregyer and then Levine.

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Thank you, Chairman. Chancellor, thank you for being there for us. I want to say that it makes it a nice thing at the beginning when we got the great news that you will be our Chancellor. I say that it makes a difference when you have an experienced educator leading our system. I want to thank you for your sense of urgency and responsiveness. Shortly after we met around the education of circumstance [sic] in District Six, I have seen strategy moves made by you and your team to improve the education circumstances of the children in my district who have been left behind for far too long, and as a result of that, as you know, 80 percent of students in District Six are level one and two from third grade to eighth grade, and that number is even worse for the ELL's student with 98 percent being level one and two. And I know that with the new vision of the mayor, you as an educator, there's a commitment in action to change that number that you inherit. I want to say gracias [sic] for all your projects you have in mind to do

with aggressive intent as many [sic] at Amedas [sic].

I appreciate your immediate reaction to others in

need and the general care for the issues of our

district. Know that you have an ally, not only

myself but all the stakeholders for the fifth

community, not for profit and leaders in northern

Manhattan that want to see that reality changing

there. Thank you for recognizing the role of the

ELL's population. As someone that still today

Spanish is my native language, I see a person in

touch with that group, and I can tell you that

appointing Milady Baez as a Deputy Chancellor send

the message loud and clear that we need to do better

for that population, that especially among the Latino

student, when we make that large percent but only

seven percent of those students they are enrolled in

Math and Science. We need to change it, and we know

that you are committed to change it and we will be

there to work with you. I have just one question,

which is what are you doing, what is the changes that

we should expect to see when it comes to those

schools that they receive a large number of students

after the budget is approved?

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Okay, I'm looking into what happens after October 31st, and one of the things we're looking at, because I know it's a particular issue in District Six, but there are two or three other districts in the city where kids come into the school throughout the whole year. Now, if you have five extra children it's no big deal, but if you have 60 extra children, you're not getting the money for those 60 extra children after October 31st. So this is a discussion that Ray and I have already been engaged in. We have to find the right number, because in many of the schools where you get a lot of extra children, you also have kids leaving. We have to see where is the balance between the kids who come in and stay versus the ones that leave, but it actually came up at a meeting that I had with principals from District Six. It's also true in certain parts of Queens. Wherever you have a large immigrant population, they come in but sometimes they leave in January, you know, like right after the holidays, but we're committed to next year giving a floating money to schools that get a large percentage of kids after October 31st.

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: The last question is on preparing the students who get this to take the test of a specialized school. I know that you are very committed to do, to bring some changes, and we know that we had a great school at Stuyvesant, Brooklyn Tech and Bronx Science, and you know, we congratulate every children who get into those schools. Our question is how can we work to provide more preparedness for our student so that they are starting also being prepared to take those tests? So, what should we--what are you doing? What should we expect to see to provide that opportunity to students throughout the city so that they can get that opportunity to be prepared to get there? In my district I know that they're saying it's not for profit, that they've been doing that for years already with great results.

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Well, there are two specific programs. One is called the Dream Program, which takes students in middle school, particularly in seventh grade who have a lot of potential, and we help them in after school programs, summer and weekends. And what we're doing is we're working with each of the specialized high schools to see if a lot

of these programs can take place in their sites with their teachers so that these students will be prepared to get the extra test prep, if you want to call it that, to work through. And also, it shows that these students have a commitment to working hard. So it's not just having the potential, but you have a commitment to make that work hard. So, that's number one. Number two, we're increasing, because we did some research as to why do more kids from this school versus this school get higher marks on the entrance test, and one of the things that we found is that the teaching of algebra in middle school is crucial. So, last year, and we're going to do it again this year, we're increasing the number of training for teachers to ensure that they will start--we'll have more algebra teachers in middle school, because in many schools there aren't any or they're not teaching that until they get to high school. So those are some of the things we're looking at. Also, increased vocabulary development. One of the things that we did with middle school after school programs, we asked all the CBO's who are working in after school to have a piece of it academic, and academic can be something like the Kaplan [sp?] Review, the

1
2 Princeton Review, the programs that we know will
3 enhance test prep. So, we're looking at this from
4 many different ways, but certainly an increase--a
5 boot camp approach over the summer. One of the
6 reasons I think we were so successful in getting so
7 many students into many of our high schools,
8 specialized high schools in the arts, is that we have
9 a summer boot camp in the arts for kids who might not
10 ordinarily have tutoring on developing a portfolio.
11 We're going to do the same things in academics.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Thank you,
13 again. Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. Council
15 Member, we've been joined by Council Member Helen
16 Rosenthal, and I believe Council Member Levine will
17 be next followed by Council Member Crowley.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: Thank you,
19 Chairman Dromm. Chancellor, it's wonderful to see
20 you this morning. I've been so thrilled by the
21 statements you've made about the importance of
22 foreign language education. I know this played a
23 role in your life as someone who's bilingual, and I
24 think I've heard you say that every kid in New York
25 City should be even tri-lingual in an ideal world.

1 This is after all the most linguistically diverse
2 city in the world, and you know how important
3 language skills are for career opportunities.
4 Really, they open up the whole world for children who
5 can learn additional languages. Often in New York
6 City because we've been so focused, rightly, on
7 helping ELL's learn English, we haven't always
8 focused so much on having English speaking kids learn
9 other languages. Tell us if you will a little about
10 your plans for getting us to the goal of an ideal
11 world in which every child is multilingual?

13 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Well first of all,
14 we're increasing our dual language programs next year
15 by 40 new programs. We want to be very clear that if
16 you look at New York City right now for I would say
17 up to about three years ago, dual language programs
18 were not very popular, and if they were popular, they
19 were popular with a very small amount of people, but
20 I know that in my own community, the dual language
21 programs now are overly registered. I have a school
22 near me that's a French dual language that people are
23 actually moving in from Canada to live in that
24 community so they can register the kids in that
25 school. So they went from one class on a grade to

three classes on a grade. So, I believe that having a dual language program does many things. It encourages parents who speak that language to seek out public schools. We also know that because the dual language programs have become so popular in our elementary schools, that this year for the first time we're increasing almost double the size of dual languages in middle school. The problem here is, and it's a really complicated problem, is that many people who speak a second language do not speak the second language in academic language. So it's one thing to teach, you know, Spanish conversation or French, but not to teach a math class in French or Science. We are now starting this year, and this was by parent request, I had a group of parents who came to see me. They wanted to start a Japanese dual language program in Williamsburg, and I said the biggest challenge we have is finding teachers. So they went out and did their research and they found some teachers. We have met with the deans of education around the city asking them to put a bigger emphasis on graduating teachers who are able to teach dual language. ESL, dual language and bilingual are three different approaches. They're not the same.

And yet, people still put them all in one piece.

This year, for the first time, we're opening a dual

language on a high school, Long Island City High

School is going to open a dual language program. SO

we want to see the dual language actually become a K

to 12. We're also saying to principals, "Invest in

dual language if you're under enrolled." If you're a

middle school that's looking for a catch for parents,

dual language and the arts are the two biggest draws

for parents who are looking for middle schools. The

other thing is I just got a request from a school in

Queens also where they want foreign language

introduced not as a dual language program but as a

foreign language. Foreign language, really in order

to do well has to be at least a minimum in my opinion

of three days a week. You're not going to do it one

day a week. So we suggested who might be people who

teach a second language might be parent volunteers

that are going to be doing it consistently. But I do

think that you're going to see in the city--we

started an Arabic dual language program. We have a

Hebrew dual language program. We will start a dual

language program where there's a request and where we

know that we have the right, the trained people.

1 We're actually even talking right now with other
2 countries about teacher exchanges in terms of dual
3 language. We have more requests now for Mandarin
4 Chinese than we have for other language. So, it's--
5 and you're right, its workforce ready, college ready
6 and being able to be global citizens. So I'm--this
7 is definitely something that will push and I will
8 continue to figure how to get it done.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: That's wonderful
11 news and great to hear your passion about this. So,
12 today, how many of our students of our 1.1 million
13 students, how many English-speaking students are
14 taking foreign language classes?

15 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Oh, I don't know that
16 number but I can get it for you. I would say, which
17 what is very interesting is that they star--the major
18 difference is that in the past, we started foreign
19 languages in middle school and that's absolutely the
20 wrong place to do it. These are the kids who tend to
21 not want to do anything anyway, but we're now
22 starting it in pre-k and kindergarten, and these kids
23 are absorbing it. They're--and you know, if you go
24 to a private school, I have a neighbor who has this--
25 he's paying 45,000 dollars a year for his student,

his children to speak Spanish and Mandarin Chinese. They have cycle semesters. We're going to do it for free, because we believe that this is what has to be done, and doing it in elementary school I think is really going to be--and then by the time you get to fifth grade, you can't help but do it in middle school, because they want to continue it.

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: Alright, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. Council Member Crowley followed by Kallos and then Rose.

COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Good morning, Chancellor. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm a public school parent in addition to being Council Member. My older son just graduated from high school last year. My younger son is in line to graduate and his high school is at 186 percent capacity. The district I represent is the most overcrowded school district in the city. Since you've become Chancellor back almost a year ago, I've been reaching out to your office. I have email chains almost monthly, and we have not gotten a meeting yet. I want to talk to you about requests that I've put into the School Construction Authority and how they have continuously

not met requests to take properties and purchase them and develop them into schools. I've been able to have one high school built in my district since getting elected. That high school is having its first graduating class this year. Thirty of the students have already graduated from Masbuth [sp?] High School, and they're in line to have higher than a 95 percent graduation rate. It's a high school that takes from a lottery, any student in district 24. It's got an incredible record, and we need to have more high schools like that for the kids in school district 24. I invite you to come out to my district. We cannot wait any longer. It's not fair to the students in the schools to be starting at 7:00 a.m. and finishing before noon if they're high school students. We know that that leaves too much of the day where they're not--where it's too free and idle, and they shouldn't have to be put in situations like that. They should be in the school at normal hours and we need to make sure that these classrooms aren't overburdened. You know how bad it is. We got to work together. Can I have your commitment that you will meet with me?

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Absolutely. But the reality is--

COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: [interposing]
Well, look, when we--

[cross-talk]

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Council Member Crowley--

COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: [interposing]
Democratic Caucus, I--

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: [interposing] Council Member Crowley? Council Member Crowley, may I just interrupt you also?

COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Yeah.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: This is the expense portion of the hearing, and so the capital portion is when President Lorraine Grillo [sp?] comes at one o'clock--

COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: [interposing]
Right, but--

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And I--

COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: [interposing]
Chancellor--

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Just a minute, Council Member Crowley.

COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: School
Construction Authority as well.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Council Member
Crowley?

COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: I apologize.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Council Member
Crowley?

COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: I do have an
expense question. I'm sorry.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. Council Member
Crowley, I agree with you because I taught in
District 24 for many years, and I understand the
problem and the situation, but to be fair, this is
the expense portion of the budget.

COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: I know.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So let's go with those
questions.

COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: I apologize, Mr.
Chair. Recently I introduced a bill in the City
Council that would monitor the amount of physical
education that happens in schools. I wanted to know
if you support this measure, and if we have an
expense that would be attributed to calculating that.
Many schools according to some independent studies

1 have not been following the state guidelines and
2 there would be an expense in terms of making sure we
3 have enough physical education teachers in every
4 school. Unfortunately, obesity rates in our city are
5 much greater than most of the rest of the country,
6 and a lot of that has to do with the lack of a
7 physical activity. Our kids are in school from six
8 to eight hours a day. Would this be a priority, and
9 can we be assured that every school in the City of
10 New York has a certified physical education teacher
11 and that each school is meeting the standards that
12 the state sets? And would there be an expense to
13 make it sure that we could comply with the state
14 regulation?

16 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Anything that is
17 going to be across the board is always going to take
18 time and extra money. We have been working on this.
19 I do believe in physical education. One of the
20 things that we've also been doing with physical
21 education is expanding the notion of physical
22 education and actually even training more classroom
23 teachers on some of the things. We have a terrific
24 program under Elizabeth Rose where we're now training
25 more people in things like yoga and other things that

1 we can do with--in schools that have limited space.
2 The other thing I will say is that we also just asked
3 custodians, for example, because we had a very bad
4 winter to make sure that the yard is, you know,
5 cleared out so we can use the school yards more
6 easily for physical activities. But I definitely
7 agree with you that we need more physical activities
8 for students and that's one of the reasons also that
9 we're looking at the kinds of programs that will be
10 in elementary schools and even increasing sports
11 program middle schools. But in terms--we have a
12 specific amount. You want to--

14 RAY ORLANDO: Sure. We devote over 330
15 million dollars to physical education currently and
16 we know--

17 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: [interposing] Do
18 you know if you have--

19 RAY ORLANDO: [interposing] we can do
20 better.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Do you know if
22 you have physical education teachers at every school
23 that kids are meeting physical education standards?
24
25

CHANCELLOR FARINA: I think in terms of certified physical education teachers, it's going to take a long time to get to that point, because they--

COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: [interposing]
Fair enough. I think we'll have a hearing on this bill shortly.

CHANCELLOR FARINA: That's fine.

COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Just lastly, because it is an expense hearing, a lot of the expense that schools are incurring has to do with food and lunch, and in terms of contracting out to small businesses to provider services, are you looking at the number of women or minority owned businesses that are getting these contracts, and is there a priority that we're looking to local businesses for food? Is that part of the plan? And how could we--

CHANCELLOR FARINA: [interposing] Let's-- yeah.

COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: You know, can the Department of Education monitor itself similar to what the Department of Cultural Affairs is doing in looking at the companies it contracts with to make

1
2 sure that their companies that have a good
3 representation of diversity of the city?

4 RAY ORLANDO: Yes, of course. We are
5 committed to improving our contract services. We
6 work with the Department of Small Business Services
7 and a variety of initiatives to both expand the
8 number of minority and women business enterprises
9 that we do business with as well as identify. They
10 help us with our training and seminars and technical
11 assistance to expand the pool. In addition, we are
12 looking to unbundle the services that we purchase so
13 that the contracts themselves are smaller and not
14 citywide and borough-wide in certain areas. We've
15 had some successes in areas like heating and plumbing
16 and H-Vac, that kind of stuff, and food is certainly
17 another area we can look at for sure.

18 CHANCELLOR FARINA: And I'd like to also
19 say that one of the things we're encouraging schools
20 to do and we've seen a big rise on that this year, is
21 do more farm to table, more gardens in schools. We
22 have a record number of schools now having rooftop
23 gardens, gardens within their own, you know, schools
24 so that the students will actually grow the food that
25 they're going to eat, and there are many schools in

the city that we're now using as part of our showcase schools. So people can go visit and see how that's done, because I think kids will eat healthier food if they are actually involved in the growing of that food in the beginning.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. We'll have Council Member Rose followed by Council Member Chin. If Council Member Kallos comes back, then we'll let him insert himself there.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Thank you, Chair, and good morning, Madam Chancellor. The tone of these hearings have taken a decidedly wonderful turn and that is because I believe your leadership. I'm really excited about the fact that you have given the superintendents more teeth and that they are now really able to advocate, support and in fact have oversight and accountability for the districts. So I'd like to thank you for that. Also, DOE should be applauded for the success of the universal pre-k program, and my first question is in regard to that program. What are the qualifications for acceptance into the Universal Pre-k?

CHANCELLOR FARINA: The students?

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Yes.

CHANCELLOR FARINA: They need to be four years old.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: and are there any income criteria?

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Absolutely not.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: So what would precipitate denial into a universal pre-k program?

CHANCELLOR FARINA: This is our pre-k expert, Sophia Pappas.

SOPHIA PAPPAS: Hi. Do I have to be sworn in? Okay.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Actually, you're right, I do have to swear you in.

SOPHIA PAPPAS: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Can you raise your right hand, please? Do you solemnly swear or affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth and to answer Council Member questions honestly?

SOPHIA PAPPAS: I do.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Sophia, thank you.

SOPHIA PAPPAS: And I just first want to thank the Council for everything you've done to support the pre-k expansion.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And Sophia, if you can state your name on the record.

SOPHIA PAPPAS: Oh, I'm sorry. Sophia Pappas. I just first want to thank you all, because Council has been incredibly helpful in helping us find applicants, find space, and spread the word to communities across the city. We're going to Council Member Treyger's meeting tonight to convene some more potential providers. I think, Chair Dromm, we have a meeting scheduled with you as well. So we really appreciate your partnership as we work to meet this very ambitious but important goal. And Council Member, in response to your question about what would be the basis of a denial, as Chancellor Farina said, we are committed to having a pre-k seat available to all children and to maximizing participation. As we work towards that with enrollment, we are taking into account parent preferences in applications as well as where children fall in different priority groups, similar to how kindergarten admissions works. So, as that process unfolds, children will be matched to programs in the coming months. So, based on that--

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: [interposing] So are you saying--

1
2 CHANCELLOR FARINA: [interposing] They're
3 not rejected. In other words, they may not get the
4 preference they want, but they're not being rejected
5 from a placement. It's a parent making a choice. So
6 if a parent puts six choices and got their fifth
7 choice and that's not what they want, it's the parent
8 not accepting the seat, not us not accepting the
9 child.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: because my district
11 office has gotten several complaints about denials of
12 a placement--

13 CHANCELLOR FARINA: [interposing] If you
14 let us know what they are, we'll take care of it
15 right away.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Okay. And they
17 felt that there was no place for the parent to get
18 information about what, why the denial. So, I--

19 CHANCELLOR FARINA: [interposing] Well,
20 Debbie, I can tell you that I get emails all the
21 time. So all you need to do is to have them send it
22 to us. I'll send it to Sophia, and someone will get
23 back to them. I have to tell you that we have really
24 an army of people working on pre-k, and there's
25 absolutely no reason why they would not get a call

1 back. So like I said, the only issues I have heard
2 are parents who are really stuck on one specific
3 place they want their child, so they call it a denial
4 when in reality, it's just that these are the other
5 choices that you have and this is where you should
6 go. But if you give us the information, we'll get
7 back to them right away.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Okay. Thank you so
10 much. And I was wondering in terms of the special
11 education population, DOE had quite a backlog of
12 outstanding Medicaid reimbursements for the therapy
13 related services for students. Where are we with
14 that? Have we been able to recoup any of those
15 outstanding, you know, monies for it, and did we put
16 a different system in place or something so that we
17 wouldn't lose or not have the availability of those
18 reimbursement funds?

19 RAY ORLANDO: Hi. The Medicaid
20 reimbursement that we receive is for children who
21 receive related services like occupational therapy or
22 physical therapy from our providers and the children
23 are eligible for Medicaid, and we can then bill for
24 the services provided to them. We have actually
25 instituted a very exciting program this year, which

1 we just completed the roll out of after piloting it
2 over the summer, which involved providing the
3 providers with occupational therapy and physical
4 therapy, so the occupational therapist and physical
5 therapist. We provided them with Chrome Books [sic],
6 which are computers that just connect to the
7 internet, which allows them to actually log in and--

8 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: [interposing] Bill
9 the hours?

10 RAY ORLANDO: log their encounters
11 actually, and put in their session notes and document
12 the time and the child served and put all the
13 information we need to claim for Medicaid in at any
14 wireless location. They can do it at any school.
15 One of the problems that providers have had in the
16 past is not all schools have, you know, extensive
17 technology. So perhaps it was hard to get on a
18 computer, to log the notes, so that got delayed or
19 not done at all. And so this effort has actually
20 been incredibly successful and we're delighted that
21 the occupational therapist and physical therapist
22 have really done a good job in improving on the data,
23 that collection that we require to collect the money
24 from the Medicaid program.
25

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: So we actually recoup that, those funds that were outstanding. It was a substantial amount of money that was outstanding.

RAY ORLANDO: We can only bill the Medicaid program for services that were provided 12 months prior, so there's a time limit on the claiming on Medicaid revenue. So if you--so I'm not really sure. I think that in past years there had been very high estimates of what could be collected from the Medicaid program, but if you don't collect it you don't collect it, if you see what I'm saying.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So that was around 500 million, am I correct?

RAY ORLANDO: I know that some people have claimed that there could have been as much as that, but that estimate's wildly too high at this point based on various--

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: [interposing] What did you collect so far?

RAY ORLANDO: We probably collected--gee [sic], I think--it's not in my head, I'm sorry. I want to say 10 to 15 million dollars this year and hoping to get more throughout, for the rest of the

1
2 year. one of the big services that we provide that
3 we don't currently collect Medicaid revenue for is
4 speech therapy, and we're hoping to be able to find a
5 way to collect for speech services going forward,
6 because that would be a big boost to what we can
7 collect.

8 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And you still have a
9 staff person dedicated to dealing with the Medicaid
10 reimbursement?

11 RAY ORLANDO: I doubled the size of the
12 office. I hired someone to join him. So, yes, we
13 have two people who work on it full time, yes. Yeah.
14 I am committed to collecting Medicaid revenue as the
15 Chief Financial Officer. Let me assure you, no one
16 in this room is more interested in collecting more
17 money from Medicaid than I am.

18 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, very good. I'm
19 sorry, Council Member Rose.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: No, thank you very
21 much for drilling down. That's what I was trying to
22 get to. Thank you. And in regard to the Title One
23 funds and the 51 million dollar reduction, how are we
24 planning to make up for that loss so that the Title
25

One schools don't suffer from that reduction in funds?

RAY ORLANDO: Hi. So the reduction in Title One funding is unhelpful, obviously.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Yeah.

RAY ORLANDO: We would really like to see more federal funds coming our way.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Especially since we're not getting this--

RAY ORLANDO: [interposing] Not less.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: the CFE money either.

RAY ORLANDO: We'd certainly love to see more state money coming as well. I don't think that we're in a position to replace reductions in federal funding with other funding at this time. We don't have funds available to do that with. And so, it is--you know, unless there is a change in, you know, the availability of Title One funding, there will be less Title One funding provided to schools in the upcoming school year than there was last year.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: So how will that impact them? Will it increase class size? Are we talking about a loss of support services?

RAY ORLANDO: Well--

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: [interposing] What--
where will we make those cuts?

RAY ORLANDO: As you know, lots of things change. Some things go up and some things go down, right? So, if Title One funding were to go down, maybe other funding goes up. For example, if we're successful at the state level in getting more state resources available to us, right, then there might be more resources available to cover something like that. Some things, you know, all the--the revenue streams all go up and down. It is unhelpful when they go down, but sometimes they're offsetting ops. At the end of the day, though, we work very hard with schools in the initial year. Schools that actually lose Title One funding entirely, Title One eligibility, we try to protect. Schools that who have a reduction in the Title One amount of money they have just have less money, less Title One funding available to them. And you know, again, without two and a half--without the 2.6 billion dollars of campaign for fiscal equity funds, our options are limited.

CHANCELLOR FARINA: But let me also add--

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: [interposing] So--

CHANCELLOR FARINA: that I think to some degree, one of the things we're trying to do is make principals smarter about how they use their budgets. Because I think over the past few years there's been a little bit of anybody can do whatever they want with their monies, and we're looking at things. You know, is your school perhaps have too much of an overhead? Is there another way to use the money more wisely? And also, indirectly, there's some things that were taken off the principal's budget. For example, in the past, if you had all day pre-k you had to pay for the afternoon with school funds. Now that we're paying for the all-day pre-k, that could be money that could be spent. So, I do think that-- and I know this past year and hopefully going forward, no school is going to suffer tremendous amount when they get their new budgets. So we're really looking very carefully at that so that everyone can pretty much assume that what they've had they will continue to have, but the one thing we have no control over is when a school gets a much less enrollment, because the money is following the child.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: So, I just want to make sure that there's no direct, no negative impact to direct student services and what I think I'm hearing is that you're going to look for other ways to absorb sort of that deficit.

CHANCELLOR FARINA: That's correct.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: So it doesn't impact direct services.

RAY ORLANDO: We will try, yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Okay, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Council Member Chin followed by Kallos and then Levin.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you, Chair. Good morning, Chancellor. It's great to see you, and it's really a different tone in these budget hearings, and I just want to let you know that I'm one of those middle school students when I was younger that started to learn Spanish in the seventh grade, and that was the best class I had, in the seventh, eighth, and ninth grade. So, give those middle school students a chance.

CHANCELLOR FARINA: You are a unique seventh grader then.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: So give them a chance, an opportunity to learn a second language whenever there is a chance. And also, follow up with one of my colleague's question earlier. For the school that wants to start a dual language program, one of the middle school in my district is doing that. Are you providing extra support? Because for them to create a whole new program, are there going to be extra funding, extra support for these schools?

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Actually, yes, because this came out of a special grant that we received. So many things, first of all, before a school can start particularly a dual language program there's a school visit that's done by Deputy Chancellor Baez to ensure that there are a, enough students. You know, the difficulty with a dual language separate from foreign language is that you need 50 percent of the children who speak the native language versus the other 50 who only speak English. So we need to make sure that that school's population fits the right criteria for the program. Second thing is that we've asked principals to confirm that they will send teachers for mandated professional development, because this is not just about any

1 teacher teaching a subject simply in another
2 language. So we already started professional
3 development about four months ago, and they will
4 also, many of them, be expected to go for more
5 training over the summer. And then we have looked for
6 the materials that we think are most appropriate for
7 these programs, and we actually had publishers come
8 in and share what they have, and we are doing the
9 professional development for the schools to say this
10 is what you should be using. So, there's a
11 tremendous amount of preliminary work before these
12 programs start in September, and the principals who
13 got these, because it was almost a competition, had
14 to show that they were committed to this process and
15 would be willing to put the time and energy into
16 them.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Okay, that's good.

19 In the preliminary budget you have included about
20 68,000 dollars for language access campaign to do
21 public awareness to promote the language learner.
22 You're putting some more funding, close to 50,000 to
23 help support the language line. Why is that just a
24 one year funding? Maybe you can explain a little bit
25

more about what is this campaigns going to include
and why is it only for one year?

CHANCELLOR FARINA: That might have been
for the CEC elections. You know, part of what has
happened--

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: [interposing]
That's not for the language access campaign, to
promote the language lines?

CHANCELLOR FARINA: We'll get back to you.
Okay.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: I mean, there are
so many languages you have to cover. You have to
cover, what, 80 languages on the phone line? Maybe
while he's looking at that, what about also--

RAY ORLANDO: [interposing] Sorry for the
delay.

CHANCELLOR FARINA: It's a language
access so that parents have responses to their rights
under guidelines, for students particularly who need
bilingual services or--

RAY ORLANDO: [interposing] Yeah, so this
campaign is designed to alert parents to the parent
bill of rights and responsibilities which provides
them with their rights and responsibilities regarding

translation and interpretation services if they're not proficient in English. So this campaign is designed to raise the awareness and alert parents to what their rights and responsibilities are. Could-- and that funding is available in Fiscal Year 16. What I expect we will do is evaluate the success of that campaign once it's been run to determine whether we need to run it again in subsequent years.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: So you going to do ads, or it's just individual schools?

RAY ORLANDO: Let's see. Yeah, there's a--

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: [interposing] Are you going to involve like the ethnic media, the community involvement?

CHANCELLOR FARINA: We actually have done a very good job--

RAY ORLANDO: [interposing] Yes, I believe we're going to do all of those things. I can get back to you with the details of the actual program, but I don't have them handy right now.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Okay.

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Actually our press office meets with the ethnic media once every two

1 weeks, two months, and we've been--every time there's
2 a new campaign we bring them to the table, and
3 certainly with the CEC elections. We asked them to do
4 articles on them. We've made a lot more information
5 and as new issues come up, we actually invite them to
6 more meetings so they can do follow ups in their
7 newspapers and in their radio spots.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: And the other issue
10 is translators in the school, especially for parents
11 who need to know about IEP issues or parents who are
12 in school where there's not a large number of
13 students with that same language abilities that they
14 need some, you know, extra help in translation.

15 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Well, I think--yeah.
16 Particularly with the IEP's this year, we asked all
17 principals around the city to make a big emphasis
18 September and October of this past year to have IEP
19 meetings on Tuesdays, you know, the Tuesdays that we
20 added 40 minutes for parent involvement. We asked to
21 be strictly in schools where they had a lot of IEPs
22 to that be the focus, and to whatever they needed to
23 do, whether they had to bring in translators or had
24 the kids be prepared to help their parents. We made
25 a big emphasis. We have gotten almost no issues this

1
2 year about IEP translations, and we have put a lot of
3 extra effort to make sure that parents have gotten
4 one on one meetings to understand what their students
5 are entitled to.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: So if a principal
7 needs translator, they can request--

8 CHANCELLOR FARINA: [interposing]
9 Absolutely.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: directly to come
11 in.

12 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Yes.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: And you have set a
14 time for that. Okay, thank you.

15 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you--

16 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: [interposing] Oh,
17 Chair, just one last point I just forgot.
18 Chancellor, I just--it's relating to budget, and I
19 really just urge you to work with us to include lunar
20 [sic] New Year in the school calendar. We were not
21 involved in the discussion. We were involved last
22 year. So, I think we can work it out and to make
23 sure that students still have the 180 day
24 requirement. So, that's my request. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I'll get a pitch in for Diwali too while we're at it. So we urge you to do that as well. Council Member Kallos followed by Council Member Levin and Rosenthal and King.

COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Thank you, Chair Dromm. We in the Council and the city are lucky to have you as the Education Chair. I'd like to first thank our Chancellor for facilitating my visit of every school in my district. So far I'm up to 18 of the public schools in my district, which is amazing, and I hope that other folks follow suit all the way up to the Governor. We should be visiting our schools and really visiting and knowing what's going on. I also want to thank you for your assistance with high school voter registration. I've been working with DOE over the past couple of years to register high school seniors. This year we did a pilot. I was curious whether or not we--now that we've done a pilot if we are ready to now roll it out as something that can be done programmatically through the schools. And I have a number of questions to the extent we can go back and forth quickly. I'd like to address food issues as well as women's equity issues as well.

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Okay. What's the question?

COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Can we bring high school senior voter registration in as a programmatic ongoing program versus just doing it as a pilot on a catch as catch can basis?

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Well, we've been doing a lot more of the senior voting registration, but why don't you and I meet to discuss what it would take to move it from the pilots.

COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Prefect. The next sad reality is I believe New York State is now 49th out of 50th states in terms of voter turnout, and so one question with regard to behavior is what would happen if 1.1 million children every year from when they started with their schools until they graduated voted on election day or the day before in their schools, and they got in the habit of doing it every single year, and did it 12 times before they turned 18? How likely would they be to vote once they turned 18, and what would our voting demographic look like 12 years from now when 1.1 million children had grown up voting?

CHANCELLOR FARINA: I totally agree with you. I think it's an embarrassment our voters turn out, not just in the city but in this country. There are many countries that hold their voting days on Sundays, and I was in Turkey when they were voting, and one of the things that's there, you don't vote, you lose a day's pay, because that can be your protest vote, but you lose a day's pay. So I do think this is something we absolutely have to work on.

COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: I would love to work with you on bringing mock voting into the schools. With regard to hunger, the sad reality is that in the wealthiest nation in the world hunger is still rampant, and especially in this city. One of the things we can do about this is Lunch for Learning, which is providing free lunch to all of our 1.1 million. I really appreciate that we've done it for the middle schools. Is there a chance to expand it into upper schools where peer pressure is really what dissuades kids from using the free or reduced vouchers? And then in your testimony you mentioned that it costs the city funding, but it's my understanding that we did receive USDA reimbursement.

1
2 So is there a plan to expand? What are the real
3 costs to the city versus the federal government?

4 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Well, first of all,
5 it doesn't cover the cost of what we've done. And I
6 want to be clear that with middle school lunch, we
7 did more than provide free lunch. We changed the
8 environments in many of the schools. That's why we
9 have the seven model schools. I invite you to visit
10 any of the seven. In one of the schools we put in a
11 jukebox. We put in booths. We put in a deli type
12 feeding counter. We painted the cafeteria so it's
13 more exciting, and because with that age group, it's
14 not just about eating, it's about relaxing, sitting
15 down. We have--we put in board games. We did a lot
16 of things. One of the other model sites has now where
17 the students choose and develop their own menu every
18 six weeks based on the ethnicities in that particular
19 school. So we really need, if we're going to
20 eventually start spreading the lunch, to really
21 figure out where the money's going to come from. I
22 would certainly, given this pilot, be willing to
23 rethink that, but you know, I think we need to very
24 careful in terms of where is the money going to come
25 from, and every time you put money in something it

comes out of something else. I do think the middle school lunch program has turned out very well.

COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: I like to take my money from the federal government, especially--

CHANCELLOR FARINA: [interposing] You and me both.

COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: So, how much funding can we count on for the free lunch program as well as Breakfast after the Bell, which is fully federally funded, can we roll that out to all 1.1 million children?

CHANCELLOR FARINA: I think this requires a more extensive conversation than just answering here.

COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Perfect. My final question is with regard to--I serve on the Women's Issues Committee, and I know I'm going over my time, but I'd like to at least lodge it and if you can answer it now or answer in writing to the committee later. The Fiscal 2016 preliminary budget includes 214,000 dollars for varsity girl's teams in effort to comply with Title Nine. According to the US Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights, the City would have to add 3,862 more sports

opportunities to comply. The funding added in Fiscal Year 16 only adds 12 teams. What further plans if any does DOE have to comply with Title Nine and so that we can offer all the women who attend our schools the same opportunities as the men with regards to athletics? And to the Chair, would you prefer the answer now or just later?

CHANCELLOR FARINA: No, that's okay we can--

RAY ORLANDO: It's 12 next year and it's an additional 12 over the next four years, year after year. So it's 12, 24, 36, 48. So it is only 12 initially. And of course we would--we are committed to expanding this to the extent possible, but again, without additional funding it's very difficult to do everything we want to do.

CHANCELLOR FARINA: But this also goes to the fact that we've asked the community based organizations and community schools, which there'll be an additional 128, that part of what they should be doing in after school is providing more physical activities as one of the things they do. We have asked for more mental health activities, more

physical activities and more arts activities to be part of the services that they provide.

COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Thank you. Thank you to the Chair and the members of this committee.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you, Council Member Kallos. Just in regard to some of the feeding programs, there will be some related cost if we were to increase the Breakfast after the Bill and additional middle school and/or free lunches as well. So I just kind of wanted to point that out. I've had some conversations with some of the workers actually involved. Do you have an idea of an estimate of those costs at this point of what it would entail?

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Well, I think one of the things that, you know, with breakfast, it's not just the food. It's that requires a different shift and the use of cafeteria workers and custodians, principals, and we have 300 schools right now who are getting it. SO, I would say right now to keep looking at how we expand it under the present way in terms of principals requesting it, and being done in agreement where there's the highest need. Because we do provide breakfast free in every school. It's just not in the classroom. So, I think it's also our

1 schools taking advantage of what's being offered now,
2 and to what degree do we take the ones where it's
3 being offered and take it to another step? But it's
4 actually an extremely expensive proposition.
5

6 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So I'm supportive of
7 both of the programs, obviously, as I believe the
8 Administration is as well, but having been a teacher
9 in a public school for as long as I was there, even
10 when we would order lunches for kids that were going
11 on trips, it took additional time for the cafeteria
12 workers to be able to prepare those lunches so that
13 you could just grab it and run with them and go on
14 trips. So, I would like to see if we could talk
15 maybe at another point about what the cost involved
16 would be, because I think we both support the
17 objective. It's just how do we get there? Council
18 Member--no? Okay. Council Member Rosenthal followed
19 by King, Lander and Williams, and we've been joined
20 by Council Member Williams.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Great. Thank
22 you so much, Chair Dromm. Thank you so much,
23 Chancellor. You're so patient as always, and totally
24 impressed. And I really want to start by thanking
25 you for reconsidering the CCS contract and pulling

1 that back. You know, it's so interesting. We may,
2 of course, end up with a more expensive budget at the
3 end of the day, but I think what we'll end up with is
4 a more accurate read. So when we're doing our
5 budgeting we'll really know what the number is. But
6 along those lines, I'm wondering if you're at a point
7 where you can share any changes in the contracting
8 process that you're contemplating.

10 CHANCELLOR FARINA: No, I think right now
11 we have a review team that's going through all this
12 and also trying to understand the complexities of the
13 federal government as to why in some places they say
14 yes and some places say no, but I'm happy to bring
15 you up to date as long--

16 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: [interposing]
17 Sure.

18 CHANCELLOR FARINA: when we have it to a
19 better place.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Absolutely.
21 Thank you. I just didn't understand your last
22 sentence. Why--

23 CHANCELLOR FARINA:[interposing] No, in
24 other words that, you know, this particular contract
25 in some places--

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: [interposing]

You mean with D [sic] rate [sic]?

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Sorry, thank you.

Oh, okay. That would be great because that was my second question. I was wondering why the 23, what the route to the 23 or the 25 million dollar number feels exceedingly low, and I was wondering what the route was and sort of the history of that. So I look forward--

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Yeah, so we'll follow up with you in terms of what we've done so far.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Thank you so much. I really appreciate it. And lastly, just sort of transparency in general, are there any steps that have happened under your tenure with transparency and the budget either for parents or for the general public in general that you've been proud of or want to talk about.

CHANCELLOR FARINA: I would say one of the things is that we have gone back and reinforced something that was on the books but maybe was not being done is that SLT's in respective schools have the right to review the budget. Although that was always on the books, it was always--it wasn't honored

1 as much as it should be. So we made very clear to
2 principals and to superintendents that parents have
3 the right to revise or look at the budgets. And
4 again, it comes with some cost, because, you know, a
5 principal may think I'm going to do this, and some
6 parents say, "Well, we would rather do that."
7 Particularly it comes to arts programs and other
8 things. So, I think that has been a big step
9 forward. I think the other thing that is extremely
10 transparent is if you look at our PEP meetings, that
11 the PEP members are actually voting after lots and
12 lots of discussion and not always agreeing with what
13 we think might be the best idea in the world. And I
14 think we have contract meetings before PEP meetings
15 that last for hours and hours. And so we're not
16 giving lip service to people who say I'm going to
17 serve, but actually say you have a real role to play
18 here and we really want your opinion. So I think
19 those are very transparent issues, and to the degree
20 that we put more and more things online so people can
21 see what we're doing, I think that makes a lot more
22 sense.
23

24 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: For the SLT
25 budget review, that's news to me, but I haven't been

1
2 spending as much time in the schools. That's great
3 to know. I can think of a whole bunch of SLT's that
4 have been asking for that. Did that get communicated
5 through--how did that get communicated?

6 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Well, I guess
7 communicated A, in Principals Weekly, which I put out
8 once a week. It also gets communicated through the
9 superintendents. These new superintendents were very
10 clearly instructed that this is one of our, you know,
11 preliminary and important decisions that we want
12 parents involved, and also, SLT's have to sign off on
13 the budgets.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Oh, wow.

15 CHANCELLOR FARINA: There is a part in
16 the budget where they sign off on it. So, I think all
17 that allows for greater transparency and involvement,
18 and it's a real role that parents can play in their
19 schools.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Wow, I'm going
21 to help get the word out. Thank you so much.

22 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And just to add, I
23 think Chancellor, if I'm correct, it's the main
24 responsibility of the SLT to review that budget.

25 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Yeah.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: That's primarily their responsibility.

CHANCELLOR FARINA: And the CEP.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, exactly. Alright, Council Member King followed by Lander and then Williams. We've also been joined by Council Member Chaim Deutsch. And let me just take this opportunity also to express my condolences to the family of the seven children who died in that tragic fire in your district and to commend you for the job that you've done in bringing back some peace and comfort to that family and to the other members of your district. Thank you for your work, Council Member Deutsch. Thank you. Council Member King?

COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and too I express the sentiments of the Chair to you, Council Member. Stay strong. Thank you. Madam Chancellor, thank you. It's always a delight to be in the room with you, and I think I can share the sentiments of everyone that our conversations we feel a whole lot better with a educator leading the ship when it comes to the DOE. So, thank you again. My question's short, but I understand, you know, we saw something happen here earlier before we even

1 started today's hearing, and I know as ex-high school
2 basketball player many, many moons ago what sports
3 did for me. You know? How it helped me discipline,
4 learn the value of teamwork and comradery, and helped
5 me know that I needed to maintain my grades if I
6 wanted to actually participate in something that was
7 greater than me. So, I know last year we've had this
8 conversation in regards to the PSAL, how the small
9 schools are able to get proper funding so the
10 students who attend those schools can participate in
11 sports. As you know, your office of school supports
12 oversees the 27 million that is allocated to the PSAL
13 and but according to Let Them Play, which they have
14 inundated my emails with emails and my Twitter feed
15 about there's still some injustice of how this money
16 is being spent or has been allocated. Clearly, I'd
17 like to know from you what systems are in place, how
18 this money has been divvied up. Why do the students
19 still need to feel that they have a need that they
20 have to come into the chambers and fight for some
21 fairness or inclusion or participation to have those
22 funding's so they can participate in athletic sports
23 in high school?

CHANCELLOR FARINA: We can give you specifics, but I want to answer this one directly. One of the things that we have been asking particularly with small schools that are co-located in buildings, that they bring, that they come together to have a team across the whole building so that they can actually get better use of the space. We also have, and I have agreed to meet with some of the students this afternoon, which is why sometimes you wait your turn to get a discussion rather than yelling, and being in school is not a bad thing. But I do think that this is something we're definitely working on. We're never going to get where everybody wants to be on all issues, but we are committed, because I do agree with you and I see--you know, I went to the PSAL last year, and when I saw the students at South Shore, which made one campus, although they are like six different schools that came together and, you know, they lost so they cried. But the importance for many of these kids is it also gives them motivation to want to go to college and do other things. So I absolutely agree with you. It's a matter of how we take funds and make sure we spread them out as much as we can. So we're committed to

working with small schools, but we're also committed to having small schools work with each other.

RAY ORLANDO: Hi. So the 27 million dollars is--twenty and a half million of it primarily pays for coaches, the salaries of the coaches themselves. So, another three and a half million goes for the officials who officiate at the games. We just spent 23 and a half of the 27. There's also money for the rentals of the venues themselves, insurance, transportation, bringing people to the games. So that's kind of the whole--that's what the 27 is going for. It's actually going for services to folks.

COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Okay.

CHANCELLOR FARINA: This year we got a million dollars to provide helmets for the football teams. So, we are looking for outside funders to help us to increase more sports, and we certainly have some great teams in New York. It'd be great if some of them gave us fund [sic] to have more sports in our schools.

COUNCIL MEMBER KING: I agree with that. It's definitely a great approach. My next question, last year we did allocate 825,000 to make sure that

1 the SAL stayed operational. Is that money going to
2 be baseline as of this year? Is there--and as far as
3 this money or any additional monies, how are
4 definitely being more inclusive of the SAL schools,
5 because they have different criteria than the PSAL?
6 How did this transition effectively be effective for
7 the students who want to play sports?
8

9 RAY ORLANDO: That money isn't base lined.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Oh.

11 RAY ORLANDO: Okay. And there are--I'm
12 sorry. I have statistics on how many folks. You
13 know, there's 3,000, over 3,000 teams at 255 schools.
14 You know, we've hired essentially, you know, a
15 webmaster to keep track of the scheduling and
16 executive director for the PSAL. I mean, we're
17 trying to provide the support necessary to expand the
18 services as available, including the addition of the
19 girl's team for Title Nine compliance and such.
20 We're very much--this is very much on our radar
21 screen.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Okay. Well, I
23 thank you, and I thank you for your commitment to sit
24 down with the students and figure this all out so
25

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much.

Council Member Lander followed by Williams.

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Well, we've actually been sharing it with the CEC's partially, and we've

1 also been sharing it with CPAC's [sic]. We're happy
2 to do a presentation for the City Council if you'd
3 like it. I think that would be great. We are also
4 beginning our snapshot that is going out, our school
5 survey that's going out. It's based on that, and
6 tomorrow we're meeting with all the superintendents
7 and the borough directors to go over what it's going
8 to look like in their work. So it's already in
9 writing, in print, and we are more than happy to do
10 presentations on it, but we've already started
11 sharing that information citywide.

12
13 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Super. I think
14 that'll be great to get the council--

15 CHANCELLOR FARINA: [interposing]
16 Absolutely.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: more up to speed
18 on it. I'm looking forward to having dialogues with
19 parents based on that much richer set of information
20 about our schools. It really shows that those goals
21 of accountability, but also thinking in a more
22 genuine and comprehensive way about what our schools--
23 -

24 CHANCELLOR FARINA: [interposing]
25 Absolutely.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: are doing is
3 entirely achievable. Good to see in your testimony
4 that parent/teacher conferences, which I made a habit
5 of asking about in the prior Administration at the
6 budget hearing is up. I wonder if you kind of have
7 some ability to start getting beneath those--get a
8 little more data there and understand how many of
9 those are happening in different languages. What can
10 we do to be really pushing a goal that I know you
11 have and that we share really getting that in--

12 CHANCELLOR FARINA: [interposing] Well, I
13 think the one thing that was really different this
14 year is that parent/teacher conferences took place
15 over a whole month, not over one afternoon and one
16 evening. We asked principals to use the 40 minutes
17 as they saw fit over the period of a month so that we
18 not only made sure that parents had appointments for
19 parent/teacher conference. You know, some districts
20 in the city used to do this as a matter of norm, but
21 it was not the citywide norm. So, there was a
22 respect for parents so that if you knew you were
23 coming at four o'clock that you had your--you didn't
24 have to wait on a long line and listen to everybody
25 else's conversation. So we said we wanted to be set

1 by appointment. We want it to be over the space of a
2 month. We want there to be support for parents as
3 they come in, whether it be translators or for
4 example if you had a child with an IEP and you needed
5 the speech teacher there or the OT teacher there,
6 that was the principal's responsibility to provide.
7 So we made a big effort and we also asked all the
8 superintendents to do the follow-up work on how much-
9 -how many more parents came versus in the past. And
10 the percentage, I think, was it 54 or 64 percent
11 higher parent/teacher conferences this year than in
12 the past. That's a big percentage jump. We also
13 said that it's not okay because your child is in
14 middle school or high school not to show up for
15 parent/teacher conferences. So a lot of phone calls.
16 We asked parent coordinators and teachers to make
17 phone calls to say, "I'm expecting you on such and
18 such a day to come." So I think we made a big effort
19 on that. We also asked principals to do follow-ups.
20 We had a lot of schools. I went to one school in
21 particular where they had 100 percent reaction, you
22 know, visiting parents, and they also decided with
23 the parent/teacher conferences the day they were
24 doing the parent survey, and no parent could leave
25

1 the building without filling out a parent survey. So
2 we're really trying to get the feedback from parents
3 about how their schools are serving them, and what
4 are the next steps, because once you talk to a
5 teacher, we also ask principals to say these are the
6 things you can follow up at home.
7

8 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: That's great.
9 Thank you. And I think the scenario where it'd be
10 great to, you know, figure out how we can kind of see
11 and feel that growing richness [sic] to 42 percent is
12 a good number, but understanding what--I think, you
13 know, knowing from just talking to lots of families
14 what it means--

15 CHANCELLOR FARINA: [interposing] No, 42
16 percent improvement over last year.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Yes.

18 CHANCELLOR FARINA: The 42--

19 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: [interposing] No,
20 no, that's what I mean. It's a great big number, but
21 it'll also be great to get a little better sense of,
22 you know, some of the things you're talking about.

23 CHANCELLOR FARINA: And I think the other
24 thing that's different this year, which I would love
25 to see even higher, a lot more teacher visits to

1 home, particularly middle schools. All our MSQI
2 schools did home visits in addition to, you know. So
3 it's--we're trying to work this many different ways.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: I could go on
5 with many other things that I'm happy and
6 enthusiastic about. I want to flag two concerns, one
7 that I really just blame the state for, but one I do
8 want to push you guys on first. This is the time
9 when we're supposed to pay attention to class size,
10 and I just do want to flag that while it's about
11 level, it hasn't gone up further, it's level at an
12 amount that is just way too high, and the number of
13 classrooms that continue to have 30 plus kids. You
14 know, the cuts that got made in teachers over the
15 years, we just still haven't been able to replace.
16 Some of that is crowding and school space, but some
17 of that is just budget based. We need obviously the
18 CFE resources from Albany to deal with it, but I
19 don't want to let this budget hearing pass without
20 being on record that the resources we're spending to
21 get class size down broadly are not yet sufficient,
22 and that's got to continue to be a shared goal. And
23 then finally, I guess I do want to just push some on
24 budget transparency and accountability. This is not
25

specifically about the Department of Education,
honestly. This is something that we've continued to
be pushing, you know, the--and Chair Ferreras spoke
about this in the budget hearing with the budget
director, you know, the new units of accountability
that we created. We really need to see those. We
appreciate the apology we don't have them yet, but
that's not as good as having them. And in general
you lead something which is massive and which we need
to be able to have better look at sort of broken down
financials and budget statistics if we are going to
do our oversight jobs. So, I just will ask as we
approach executive, that you work to bring that to us
and provide it in advance so we can do a good job of
providing the oversight and being the partners that
the charter requires of us. Thank you. Thank you,
Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Council Member
Williams followed by Council Member Levin.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Thank you, Mr.
Chair. Thank you, Chancellor. I came a little late
so I didn't get to hear all of your testimony. I
apologize. A few things that I think you did touch
on but I did want to bring back up. One had to do

1 with CompStat. I've been always trying to push
2 agencies to work together to look at similar data.
3 One of the things I'm most proud about with the Gun
4 Violence Taskforce is there's now an entity looking
5 at the work that's being done in the 15 neighborhoods
6 together looking at some of the same information and
7 providing services in those communities. My question
8 is, and I think you talked about what you're doing
9 kind of in the DOE's version, is there--are there
10 plans to work together with NYPD, look at their
11 CompStat, look at the crime data and use that to
12 apply particular programs in certain areas or use
13 that to apply for funds for certain areas? Because
14 there's a great correlation between education, crime
15 and those statistics. So are those numbers looked at
16 jointly by DOE and NYPD?

18 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Well, I think our
19 conversation is really more in terms of what are the
20 supports that certain parts of the city need more of.
21 For example, you know, the retraining of our school
22 safety officers, what we call Safe Corridor
23 Neighborhoods, neighborhoods in the city where it's
24 more difficult for kids to get from their homes to
25 their schools. So, in those kind of areas we do look

1 at NYPD data so that we can ensure that our kid's
2 safety, but in terms of looking, we already know that
3 we're targeting several neighborhoods for--more for
4 the sense of--you know, the rate of homeless has gone
5 up. We have centers in certain communities that for
6 kids it's just very, very difficult to love there.
7 So, that's the kind of data. So we're also working
8 with, you know, the Commissioner of Health. We're
9 working with lots of different Commissioners. We
10 have something called the Children's Cabinet. That
11 meets on a regular basis to talk and the NYPD sits at
12 that. So, yes, we're looking to work together,
13 because there isn't anything that affects children
14 that isn't also relevant to all the other
15 Commissioners and all city agencies.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Thank you. Do
18 you have any more--I saw what you wrote about the
19 Renewal Schools, I didn't know if you had any more
20 specificity about what the funds would be spent on.

21 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Well, the funds are
22 being spent very specifically in an additional hour
23 of school time, Saturday academies, summer work,
24 additional staff development for professional
25 development for teachers, extra support in making

1 say is that these communities ask for more polices,
2 it's why they get more police. They also ask for
3 better education and better housing, some reason that
4 response is not as responded to as well. But
5 infrastructure, I know we don't have a lot of places
6 to build, but I found in some of the places that
7 young people are not succeeding the way we know they
8 can. The infrastructure is very bad when you go from
9 one school to the other. It's just not even worth
10 being taught in the classroom. There's leaks.
11 There's cracks. The hallways are not kept. Is there
12 enough funding to bring everything up to the way it
13 should be right now, or is it that we need more
14 funding?
15

16 CHANCELLOR FARINA: That's a leading
17 question. Of course, there's never enough funding,
18 but let me be very clear, I have been in education a
19 very long time, and facilities have never been as
20 good as they are now. And I say this because I
21 think, and I give a lot of credit to this to Kathleen
22 Grimm, when Kathleen Grimm became Deputy Chancellor,
23 she almost did a school by survey about what needed
24 to be done. And I have to tell you that any time I
25 visit a school--I was just in a school two weeks ago

1 where there was a leak in the roof. I was back in
2 the office 10 minutes. I mentioned it to Elizabeth
3 Rose and within two days there was somebody doing
4 that. We are very much aware of where facilities
5 need to be improved, and I do think this is something
6 that the Bloomberg Administration did particularly
7 well and made sure that they invested money on this.
8 SO, I do think its better. Is it where it needs to
9 be? Not necessarily, but certainly in most spaces we
10 immediately go in and do--I haven't seen one building
11 that I have visited this year that wasn't newly
12 painted, that didn't have the right access, and if I
13 see something when I go to school, and all my Deputy
14 Chancellors know the same thing, if something is not
15 the way it should be facilities-wise, we immediately
16 go to Elizabeth Rose and say this needs to be done.
17 And like I said, I think that was one of the legacies
18 that Kathleen has left behind that we should be very
19 proud of.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: I'm excited to
22 hear that. I don't think we are where we should be,
23 but I do want to just piggyback on what you said,
24 because my office was in contact with your office and
25 there was some immediate response. So, I know that's

1 something that's taken seriously. I want to say thank
2 you for that. I know we'll be following up soon. I
3 have a couple of other issues. I did want to
4 piggyback on Council Member Lander on the U of A. I
5 think we were expecting a lot more transparency and
6 the U of A just from the Administration in general,
7 and I think it's a lot easier to say that we're going
8 to do it as opposed to do it when we get there. So,
9 we really hope that the U of A's get a little bit
10 smaller and a little bit more information so we can
11 understand and do our jobs. Thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. Council
14 Member Levin followed by Council Member Gibson.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Thank you very
16 much, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Chancellor. I have a
17 couple of questions. First question about children
18 that reside in the homeless shelter system. So
19 there's 24,000 children in New York City shelter
20 system. According to McKinney Vento [sic] Homeless
21 Assistance Act and the Chancellor's Reg [sic] A-780,
22 Title One schools are required to set aside a minimum
23 of 100 dollars per homeless people. Can you explain
24 a little bit further what funding is in place to
25

support children that are in the homeless system outside of Title One funding?

RAY ORLANDO: Hi. So, under McKinney Vento, this year schools received about one and a half million dollars. They're competitive grants. Additionally, both the AIDP program in Title One have set asides for students in temporary housing, and that total is approximately 14 million dollars from those two pots as well.

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Has DOE considered including a fair student funding wait for homeless people needs because the population is so large?

RAY ORLANDO: The chancellor and I have been discussing a complete review of all of the existing waits to look their accuracy as well as to look at populations including homeless children who may indeed be considered for new waits. So that is a conversation that is beginning, I can tell you, and so stay tuned and I'd be delighted to keep you informed as we continue to talk about it.

CHANCELLOR FARINA: And the other thing you should know, Steve, that this is a such a citywide problem that we're also cooperating with other agencies because one of the things that I

1 didn't know is that in many of homeless shelters, we
2 did not have student libraries. So working with
3 Paula Gavin and Scholastic and a few other people,
4 we're now able to put libraries, student libraries,
5 in most of our homeless shelters and we've done that
6 within the last few months, because there's a whole
7 bunch of things we need to do because you can't, you
8 know, if the child has to do homework and other
9 things, how do we make sure that they have the
10 facilities? So, we're looking to work on this issues
11 with all other agencies and also making sure that one
12 of the things that I think principals really deserve
13 a lot of credit, that almost every principal I've met
14 with that has a high percentage of homeless students
15 really wants those students no matter where they're
16 located in the city to be able to come back to the
17 schools. And I've gone to schools, I went to one in
18 District 23 where the student travels from the Bronx
19 every day. This is in Ocean Hill Brownsville and to
20 come from the Bronx, because what's happening in that
21 school is so spectacular that they don't want to lose
22 that. So, I think this is an issue that we have to
23 take on many dimensions.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: In terms of UPK
3 then, how does--how is DOE looking at the specific
4 homeless population for three and four year olds
5 coming into the UPK system?

6 CHANCELLOR FARINA: I mean, again, they
7 have--you know, they should be registering. Again,
8 they register within where they're presently
9 residing. The problem is that they may be moving, you
10 know, and that's something that we're committed that
11 once you're in a building and you're registered in a
12 building you get to stay in that building. If they
13 should to move to another, it would be their choice
14 to register somewhere else.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Do we have data on
16 the number of children in the UPK system that are
17 residing in temporary housing?

18 CHANCELLOR FARINA: No.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: And last question,
20 Chancellor, I just want to change the subject here
21 because I only have a minute left. On Breakfast in
22 the Classroom, it's been an issue that I've been
23 championing for a while now. I sponsored two pieces
24 of legislation last term about it. I know that a
25 couple of my colleagues have asked about it already.

1 As you know, the cost of the meals themselves are
2 reimbursed by the federal government, and we heard
3 earlier from you that there's costs that are
4 associated, I think, with some of the ramp up costs.
5 Have you been able to determine exactly what those
6 costs are? Because right now we're leaving tens of
7 million dollars, 50 million dollars or so in federal
8 funding on the table because that's what can pay for
9 it. And in looking at other, you know, looking at
10 other big cities across the country, you know, we
11 rank 61st out of 62 big cities in terms of our
12 enrollment in breakfast, and other cities, large
13 cities, D.C., Memphis, Atlanta, Los Angeles, Houston
14 all have above 70 percent enrollment, so 70 percent
15 of the children that are receiving free or reduced
16 lunch are eating breakfast at school. We are at a
17 little over around 35 percent. So there are, you
18 know, other cities are doing it at 70 percent.
19 They're large cities. They have large administrative
20 costs, not as large as ours, but Houston is a big
21 city. D.C.'s a big city.

23 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Look, we're looking
24 at it. We have some preliminary figures, but they're
25 very preliminary, but I want to be clear again,

1 because sometimes there's a misconception. There is
2 already free breakfast in every single school. As a
3 principal, I offered it. I encouraged it. I allowed
4 parents to come in and have breakfast with their
5 children if they wanted it, and not that many people
6 took us up on it. So, I just want to be clear, that
7 it's having it taken to the classroom from the
8 cafeteria that's a major difference. So--

10 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: [interposing]

11 Right.

12 CHANCELLOR FARINA: This is something we
13 will look at and certainly we'll get back to you
14 because this is something that's presently in
15 discussion.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: I mean, I just
17 wanted to say, I mean, I was talking to my aunt who's
18 a substitute school nurse in Downbrook, New Jersey at
19 an elementary school, and they have a grab-n-go cart
20 there that they just instituted last year. And from
21 a school nurse perspective, she's seen a huge
22 difference, and in terms of the number of kids that
23 are coming in with stomach aches and other headaches
24 and things like that. And you know, administratively
25 it works. You know, there's--it's up to each school,

1 but there's definitely a template for large cities to
2 do it. Chicago has gone through this. LA has gone
3 through this. As I said, like you know, Houston. I
4 mean, the models are Detroit and Newark, cities that
5 are not that well known for their, you know,
6 exemplary school systems, but they've been able to
7 get the logistics of it right so that their
8 enrollment in the school breakfast program is very
9 high. When you look at a city like Newark or Detroit
10 they are over 90--yeah, Newark is at 91 percent.
11 Detroit is at over 80 percent, and so you know,
12 they've--it's taken some time, but they've been able
13 to figure it out, and I offer my services in talking
14 with custodians and trying to figure that part of it
15 out. I'd very much like to be a part of this because
16 it's been something I've been very invested for a
17 long time. Thank you.

18
19 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Thank you, we will.

20 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. And
21 Council Member Levin, we did discuss this a little
22 bit prior to your return, so there was some
23 discussion about the cost that would be affiliated
24 with that, and we'll follow up with you on that as
25 well. Council Member Vanessa Gibson?

COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I appreciate your leadership in all the work you've done, and good afternoon, Chancellor, to you and your team. And first, I just want to thank you for all the work you do. I represent school District Nine in the great borough of the Bronx, and we've had many, many conversations. So I appreciate all the efforts you make in bringing District Nine to where it should be. I wanted to just applaud the community school's approach. I think that's an awesome idea to bring a holistic perspective when you look at lot of our school children. I wanted to ask a question. I Chair Public Safety here at the Council, and I've been a part of many of the conversations with DOE, with MOCJ and the NYPD and school safety around restorative justice, around changing the disciplinary code B21. There's been a lot of conversation, a lot of talk about it, the establishment of the school leadership climate team and the different sub teams that you have of professionals, educators, and others. So, I just wanted to ask, has there been an update on that? And I appreciate obviously the intention to focus on prevention and not detention and trying to de-

1
2 escalate situations that unfortunately sometimes land
3 children in handcuffs when they don't need to be and
4 suspended and issuing summonses. So, are we looking
5 at school safety agents in terms of the headcount,
6 and is there an update that you could provide to us
7 on the school leadership climate team as it relates
8 to other restorative justice?

9 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Well, first of all,
10 you know, we have the new discipline code that went
11 out. We purposely put it out middle of the year so
12 we could see what parts of it worked and what parts
13 of it don't, so by the time we open in September, if
14 we need to tweak it in any way we'll be able to do
15 it. What we have seen already even prior to the
16 discipline code is that our suspensions are going
17 down. And they're not going down just to falsify the
18 records, they're going down because people are being
19 much more proactive in classroom management issues.
20 They're more proactive in making sure that part of
21 the Mondays we've asked every principal in the city
22 to use at least one or two of the Monday's PD to talk
23 about classroom management and how do you talk to
24 kids, how do you de-escalate issues? And I think we
25 already have a tremendous amount of principals who

are invested in this movement, particularly in the high schools, and we're just going to be doing a lot more training. I think the other big piece of this is the school safety officers are going through new training. They're going for new training under Mark Grampasat [sp?] to be able to understand what the new code of behavior is so that instead of summonses there'll be warnings. We're also looking for school safety officers to make, work more proactively with kids in a positive way. So for example, the same way the NYPD has the Pal Program where they play basketball with the kids so they get to know them in a different way, I'd love to see more of that from school safety officers. I'm actually addressing them, I believe, next week. He's bringing a lot of the heads together, and one of the things we're going to start doing is celebrating school safety officers who go above and beyond. I don't think it's about having more. It's about having the right people in the right schools with the right attitudes, and I do think that makes a big, big difference, and we have people who are willing to work with us on this initiative.

COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Okay, and I appreciate that. I am definitely in favor of quality versus quantity, and certainly the creative partnerships in recognizing all of our educators and students need to be safe, but we want to make sure we're doing it in a creative way. You said that suspensions are going down. What about the number of students receiving summons? And can you explain a little bit more about the warning system? Is there like a three warning before it turns into something?

CHANCELLOR FARINA: No. Under this new-- the discipline code, they will not have the same summons procedure, and the warning is simply a matter of getting to know students. One of the things I'm recommending to principals is that kids who are consistently the ones in trouble be treated a little bit differently. Bring them to the office on something positive. How do we celebrate the kids who are doing the right thing? SO there's a lot of things that are involved in this, and I think Letitia who's your superintendent in District Nine has taken this as one of her priorities, and talking with principals about how do we celebrate when kids do something right rather than wait for them when they

do something wrong. It's not an easy solution, but I also agree with you that handcuffs are not the answer.

COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Right, I agree, and I do think it's not easy, but we come to the table with the same mindset. We certainly can make a lot of strides of progress. I just also wanted to ask a quick question about the number of guidance counselors and suicide prevention specialists. So, in my district in District Nine we had two suicides last year, and just trying to prevent and focus on some of the intervention work. After these unfortunate suicides, I got an incredible amount of resources for those particular schools, but then after a series of months they were gone. So I'm just trying to see, is there anything consistent that we're looking to do as far as guidance counselors and suicide prevention specialists?

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Well, first of all, we've increased guidance counselors by 200, but nowhere the number that we need. To me, the community schools is another place where we'll have a lot more of those services available. I'm perfectly aware of the suicide numbers in the city, and one of

1 the things that we've done is done a lot more
2 training of guidance counselors and social workers
3 and other people in buildings about the warning
4 signs. We have also put out entire pamphlets around
5 what are the things parents should be able to think
6 about. We've done workshops for parents. One of the
7 best attended series of workshops this year were how
8 to deal with your teenager's stress, because I think
9 everyone needs to be aware that there are signs. And
10 one of the signs is also absenteeism. You know, we
11 keep going back to absenteeism. So, there's a lot
12 more work to be done on this, and I do understand
13 that we shouldn't lose any child, but it's a lot of
14 work and it requires--this is a really home/school
15 connection kind of work. It's not just on our hands.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Okay, thank you
18 so much. I appreciate it and look forward to working
19 with you, and thank you, Mr. Chair, for your
20 leadership.

21 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you, Council
22 Member Gibson. I look forward to working with you at
23 a future hearing as well on some of these issues.
24 So, thank you. Lightening round. I had some
25 questions on special education to ask you as well.

1 I'm looking at the Mayor's Preliminary Management
2 Report, and I see that the numbers of students
3 referred into special education has increased by
4 approximately 30,000 if I'm reading this correctly,
5 both in the number of students receiving special
6 education services and special education enrollment
7 in preschool. Can you explain why those numbers have
8 gone up like that?
9

10 CHANCELLOR FARINA: First of all, this is
11 a national number, and I will tell you that right now
12 it's also because a lot of these students are being
13 recommended by their parents. Special education is
14 also speech. It's also OT. It's a matter of a lot
15 of things that are not necessarily these students
16 being placed in special ED classrooms, but getting
17 special ED services. So I think parents are getting
18 a lot more sophisticated, a lot more support for
19 having IEP's that will help their children in many,
20 many ways. So I don't think it means that we're--
21 we're certainly not putting more children in self-
22 contained special ED classrooms. That's not--in
23 fact, if anything that's going in the other
24 direction, but it's about getting a lot more service.
25 I would say the largest growing service in special ED

1
2 is speech. You know, the whole language development
3 issues, and it's now, you know, at one point we
4 started looking at these in third grade, and now it
5 starts as early as kindergarten. So, that's really
6 one of the reasons for that increase.

7 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So for teacher
8 initiated referrals, what is the ladder of referral
9 for teachers to follow? Is that changed at all, or
10 has that remained basically the same? How is that
11 done on the--

12 CHANCELLOR FARINA: [interposing] it's
13 basically the same. I mean, certainly they should
14 move it up to the principal who then, you know,
15 presents it before the committee. I think one of the
16 things is that we don't have school based support
17 teams in the same we used to have them, but as we
18 move now into the borough offices, we expect to have
19 that support at the borough office so that they can
20 do that. And like I said, we're moving more towards,
21 you know, collaborative team teaching, and but it's
22 not like we're growing District 75 or any of those
23 programs substantially.

24 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. Are there any
25 investments being made to prevent students with just

1 language barriers from being referred into special
2 education rather than to receiving ESL services or
3 ELL services?
4

5 CHANCELLOR FARINA: That is on our
6 agenda, absolutely. When you have students who may
7 be misdiagnosed, and that's one of the reasons why I
8 separated the Department of Special ED and the
9 Department of English Language Learners. We need to
10 see them as two separate things. For too long they
11 have been put into one category, and that is not
12 really the way we want to go. So, there are students
13 who come to us who may have a language issue, but in
14 no way does that make them special education, or
15 special education may have overlays. So, the reality
16 is that it's a big concern. It's something I discuss
17 all the time with both of my Deputy Chancellors, but
18 separating that department, there were many reasons
19 for it, but that was one of them, because I think for
20 too many years we assumed that if you didn't speak
21 English like within the first month of coming here
22 that there was something wrong with you, and that
23 cannot be the way the we go forward. So, yes, Danny,
24 it's on my mind and we're looking at it.
25

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Well, I want to thank you also for doing that, because that's something that I personally have raised here in this committee in the past four or five years that wasn't done, and just separating them out and giving them different titles I think was vitally important, but also appointing the new Director Milady Baez to that position I think was a move in the right direction. We look forward to continuing to work with her. I thought we had a very successful ELL hearing here a month ago in terms of exploring the issues, and there are many more that we could have gotten into, but the hearing went on for hours as it was. I'm sure we'll go back and look at some of those issues and look forward to working with you on that as well in the future. Another question I have in this lightning round, do we still use ARIS? What's going on with ARIS, and if we're not using ARIS, is there a new company and how much does that cost?

CHANCELLOR FARINA: We actually stopped using it and we're developing something that hopefully will be better and more complete, and we're happy to discuss that with you in terms of what we're looking at.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. And one of the big concerns with that was parental access to the system.

CHANCELLOR FARINA: I'm sorry?

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I'm sorry. One of the big concerns about that was parental access to the system, is that part of your--

CHANCELLOR FARINA: [interposing] Yeah, well the reality is that there was very little use. The parents were not using it. I mean, I think we had in the single digits parental use of it. So, to spend that money that we did on that without it being used doesn't make any sense. So we can use that money for other things.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: But the parental--the reason parents weren't using it, what was the reason parents were not using it? Was it--

CHANCELLOR FARINA: [interposing] No, I think there's just so many other ways to get information and if we really encourage principals to do the right thing and teachers, we have many ways to get that to parents rather than them having to go on technology.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Can you tell us at this point if you're going to do an RFP for a new contract or?

CHANCELLOR FARINA: No, I think we're doing it in house.

RAY ORLANDO: Yeah, I believe the work's being done in house, but I can get back to you.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I'm sorry?

RAY ORLANDO: I believe the work's being done in house, but I can get back to you.

CHANCELLOR FARINA: In house.

RAY ORLANDO: In house, excuse me.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: In terms of some additional UPK questions, what is the total budget for UPK program for Fiscal 2016 and how much of that will go to CBO's versus UPK programs? And if you can identi--

RAY ORLANDO: [interposing] We're still putting together the budget for the upcoming year for Fiscal Year 16. It depends on a million factors, as you know. It's going to depend on how enrollment actually lands as well as a multi--you know, what rates we're able to negotiate with the providers that we're talking to right now in the RFP process. I

1
2 expect that by the time that we come back at the
3 executive budget hearing that I suspect you'll be
4 holding, we'll have a much--we'll have a picture for
5 you.

6 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, and I think you
7 held--

8 RAY ORLANDO: [interposing] There's a lot
9 in flux right now.

10 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: You held a press
11 conference a week or so ago, two weeks ago, saying
12 that I think 22,000 students had signed up just in
13 that first day or so. Where do we stand now? Maybe
14 Sophia or somebody can answer that?

15 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Thirty-five? Thirty-
16 seven thousand.

17 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thirty-seven thousand
18 as of today?

19 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Just in the short
20 period of time.

21 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So we're about more
22 than--

23 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: [interposing] Way
24 ahead of last--
25

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: [interposing] A little more than halfway there, right? Okay. One issue that keeps coming up and Council Member Levin and I have just begun to really explore this. I'm going to explore a little bit publicly, well maybe just to mention it to you. We still have daycare centers where essentially they're doing the same job as we're doing in UPK. Has any thought been given to pulling those day care centers into the DOE system or into the UPK system, because it's still early childhood education that's happening in those daycare centers? And I'm talking about three years and younger. Has any discussion gone on about that?

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Well, I think the Mayor has made a strong statement on zero to three education, but at this moment, I think we have enough on our plate with four years and up, but certainly we're looking at everything that will increase literacy and children's wellbeing as young as possible. So, you know, we'll keep talking about how we can work together on this.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Because one of the issues that I hear from some of the teachers in the daycare centers is that you have UPK teachers who are

there essentially making more money than the director of the daycare center and making more money than the teacher of the three year old room, and I think we would agree that what the three year old room is doing is as important as what's going on in the four year old room. And I would like to see some discussion going on about that.

CHANCELLOR FARINA: You know, keep in mind that a year ago we didn't have the parody we even have today with the UPK. You know, it takes time because money is not flowing. So, you know, we make decisions based on many different things.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. And there's an issue of--it came up recently in a WNYC report regarding co-locations or placement of UPK's into other schools, into existing schools. Some claim that that should be done with the co-location process. I think you have a difference of opinion with that. Can you explain where you're coming from on that issue?

SOPHIA PAPPAS: So, as we meet our goal of providing a seat for every child, we're using a number of strategies as Ray mentioned. It involves schools. It involves community based centers, and in

1 certain areas where we have a very high demand and we
2 don't have a permanent location yet, but we want to
3 make sure we fulfill our commitment for this
4 September, we are creating DOE operated Pre-K
5 centers, some of which have locations in district
6 buildings. So we are working very closely with those
7 communities and the principals, SLT's and CEC's to
8 make sure that implementation goes very smoothly. On
9 the particular question of the co-location, we do not
10 believe that what will happen in that building as a
11 result of this changes the use of the building
12 significantly to warrant that. That's why we don't
13 consider it a co-location. All that being said,
14 we're out there. We're developing plans in
15 collaboration with the principals to make sure that
16 this is a benefit to the school community.

18 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Is this situation
19 similar to the situation where you may open a new
20 school, for example, in a Catholic school or
21 something and then you begin to grow the culture of
22 the school by placing a grade in at a time? And then
23 I have seen other schools take a floor of that school
24 until the new school has grown, and you place them in
25 there temporarily, is that similar?

1
2 SOPHIA PAPPAS: So, I'm not familiar with
3 that model, but for these temporary seats, I will
4 say, every year we will be assessing where we are
5 with the permanent location, enrollment trends and
6 what's going on at the school to figure out if we
7 still need to have the pre-k there. Because in a lot
8 of these cases, it just won't be in those locations
9 depending on where we are with the permanent
10 location.

11 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Let me just give you a
12 little example. In PS 280 in Jackson Heights for
13 example was a Catholic school. They opened that
14 school a number of years ago. The school was filled
15 one grade at a time, and in the meantime they were
16 putting kids in that building I believe from
17 neighboring schools until another school could be
18 built. Is that essentially what you're saying is
19 going on with the UPK as well? You're placing them
20 into these schools until you find another site for
21 them?

22 SOPHIA PAPPAS: Again, I'm not familiar
23 with that particular model, but for these pre-k
24 centers, I think what's exciting for us is that you
25 have locations in multiple buildings where you have a

1 supervising teacher on site all the time supervising
2 what's going on in each location, and then you
3 actually have a DOE principal who oversees all of the
4 pre-k centers. So, what's exciting about that is you
5 essentially have DOE operated pre-k centers where a
6 principal is focused on just overseeing those pre-k
7 classrooms.
8

9 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Is the teacher, the
10 supervising teacher, what they would have formally
11 called a teacher in charge?

12 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Or an Assistant
13 Principal.

14 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Or--

15 SOPHIA PAPPAS: [interposing] They're
16 still firming up what exactly the title is, but the
17 function is like an Assistant Principal.

18 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I was going to say,
19 there was some type of a differential, I believe, in
20 programs where you had what they allied teachers in
21 charge in the contract, and--

22 CHANCELLOR FARINA: [interposing] We
23 haven't used that in many years. Our preference
24 would be to have an authorized supervisor, which
25

would be an AP, and that's probably more what we will be doing.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I see, okay. So it's the--okay. Alright. Council Member Chin and then I think I'm done with my questioning.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you, Chair. Following up with the pre-k, I mean, we do very much appreciate all the new seats that were added in lower Manhattan. One of the questions I have is that there was some seats that were cited in Tweet [sic], which we're very concerned about, because historically we have used those classrooms to incubate for the new school. So if the seats for pre-k are being permanent seats, then we're losing space for incubating new schools.

CHANCELLOR FARINA: The pre-k seats that are going to be only partially at Tweed [sic], because it's not the whole floor, are going to be under--it's like an annex for the Spruce Street School. So, it will be a connection to the Spruce Street School, and I think at the moment we're expecting it to be four pre-k's, and that's because there was such a need for pre-k's in that neighborhood and Spruce Street did not have the space

1 to do it. So that's really what that's supposed to
2 be doing.

3 SOPHIA PAPPAS: Clarify that as a follow-
4 up.

5 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Right.

6 SOPHIA PAPPAS: Because it may be at one
7 of the pre-k centers.

8 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Right, okay.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: That is supposed to
10 be--from the list that we got from DOE, those
11 classrooms were supposed to be permanent. At the
12 same time we have temporary class, pre-k class, in
13 the new PEP school that's supposed to open up I
14 September.

15 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Well, let me get back
16 to you, because I understood that the supervisor for
17 that site was going to be the principal of Spruce
18 Street and that would be part of their--but we can
19 get back. Yeah, we'll get back to you.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Yeah, we were just
21 concerned that we want to make sure that we're still
22 able to maintain the classroom in Tweed for us to be
23 able to incubate for the next elementary school
24 that's going to be--
25

CHANCELLOR FARINA: [interposing] Well, we have other sites for incubation, but certainly those particular classrooms, which there are four classrooms, will always be for whatever the needs are of the students in the district.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Okay. So if you could get back to us. The last question is on college access in terms of, you know, you, Chancellor, you just mentioned that you added 200 counselor, and according to our headcount term and condition from DOE there's a total of 2,704 guidance counselors throughout the city, and we want to know what's the average number of guidance counselor per school? It seems like some high schools have guidance counselors and then they have college counselor, and some high school don't have that. Some high school may have guidance counselors. So, out of these 2,704 guidance counselors and only about 279 of them are bilingual, is DOE going to work on doing something to address the language barriers for parents and students?

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Well, I mean, this is one area that if we were going to get money from the state I would prioritize for more needs. To me,

1 guidance counselors are crucial, but in terms of
2 whether you get a regular guidance counselor or
3 college, that's pretty much under the principal's
4 direction. What I have been encouraging principals
5 to do, particularly since so many of our small high
6 schools are co-located, that they share one guidance
7 office, because it really is possible to do rather
8 than have everybody duplicate the same services. If
9 there's something--they could each have their own
10 guidance counselor, but in terms of the guidance
11 office, having one that's shared by several schools.
12 I was just at a school where they realized that if
13 they were to do that, it would not in any way impact
14 the services for kids, but they would actually get
15 more services overall. So, it's also a matter of how
16 many people are actually trained well to do the
17 college advisement piece, but in terms of language,
18 it's really actually more for parent's understanding
19 and we encourage that training to be done under the
20 parent coordinators, those that have them at the high
21 school level to educate parents. We're doing a lot
22 more education to parents also around financial
23 literacy for college admissions. Many of our kids
24 miss out on scholarships because they don't even know
25

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Well, thank you very much, and I want to thank you for coming in. I also am very appreciative of the approach and the tone of these hearings and for your openness. I thank you for that as well, and we look forward to working with you on a continued basis. Thank you very, very much. So this hearing is going to continue at one o'clock with the School Construction Authority, President Lorraine Grillo. In the meantime we're just going to leave it open until she gets here, and we'll take it from there.

[recess]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Good afternoon. My name is Daniel Dromm. I'm Chair of the Education Committee with the New York City Council. I've been joined by Council Member Margaret Chin and Council Member Inez Barron, and I want to welcome everybody to today's hearing. This is the second part of the City Council's Education Committee hearing on the Fiscal Year 2016 Preliminary, excuse me, Capital Budget for the Department of Education and the Fiscal 2015 Preliminary Mayor's Management Report for the DOE and School Construction Authority, or SCA. This should be a hearing on the DOE's proposed revised

amendment to its Fiscal 2015/2019 Capital Plan.

However, DOE and SCA has basically ignored the Memorandum of Understanding between the City Council and the Administration and has not submitted a Capital Plan Amendment. We are left to hold this hearing on the DOE's December 2014 proposed five year capital plan for Fiscal Year 2015 to 19. This failure to comply with the MOU is negligent to the Council and disrespectful [sic], and I believe, counterproductive. I feel it's very unfortunate. I understand that there are conditions and reasons for this happening, yet it just really makes my job impossible if I don't have that information before me, and I'm sorry I have to say that, but that's really where it's at, and I do hope that we will have this information in time so that we can analyze it and digest it prior to the executive budget hearing. So, we really do need to have those numbers. The December plan totals 13.5 billion over five years. It includes 783 million from the state's Smart Schools Bond Act, which was approved in November 2014 to fund technology in schools as well as capital projects associated with the expansion of Universal Pre-Kindergarten. I would like to hear more about the

Smart Schools Bond Act funding, the process, the timelines and how the projects are going to be selected by the School Construction Authority. The December plan allocates 4.5 billion for capacity to construct 40,329 new seats. Of this amount, 3.45 billion is scheduled in the new capacity program to build 31,823 seats and to design 806 seats. Two hundred and 10 million is to build roughly 2,800 pre-kindergarten seats and 490 million is for a class size reduction program with 4,900 seats. I'd like to hear more about this program today and how the DOE plans to target schools for class size reduction. I'd also like to discuss the new capacity plan which is 16,616 seats--that's a good number, we should play that number--seats short of meeting the projected seat need, including how the DOE and the SCA determine capacity needs and how we can finally meet those needs. The capital investment category totals 5.27 billion dollars. These funds are for capital improvement projects such as technology, exteriors and the removal of transportable classroom units or commonly known as TCU's. Under the December plan, the DOE set aside 480 million dollars to fund the removal of all TCU's citywide. There were 317 TCU's

1 last school year serving 6,935 students. The
2 December plan shows that 81 TCU's have a removal plan
3 identified and 35 TCU's were removed since the
4 publishing of the original capital plan. Today, I
5 would like to hear from the DOE and the SCA about
6 their process of identifying plans for TCU removal
7 and how realistic it is to replace this capacity
8 under the proposed five year plan. I realize there
9 are constraints related to funding and finding sites
10 for new capacity, but I am concerned that removing
11 TCU's may not be an achievable goal given the SCA's
12 inability to meet the capacity needs. The final
13 category of funding in the December plan is mandated
14 programs which includes 369 billion for projects such
15 as PCB remediation, prior plan completion costs,
16 boiler conversions, and wrap-up insurance. Wrap-up
17 insurance is projected to cost 300 and--excuse me,
18 830 million over five years. The SCA has attributed
19 growth in this spending area to the state's scaffold
20 law, which has contributed to high insurance
21 premiums. There are many other issues that I am sure
22 will come up today from other committee members and
23 myself and I look forward to the discussion with the
24 SCA and DOE after their testimony. I would like to
25

remind Council Members that this is a capital hearing, so please keep your questions only related to the capital budget. And I'd also like to thank my dedicated staff, Medina Itzamatine [sp?], Nora Yaya, Joan Polvomi [sp?], Jan Atwell, and Asia Schamburg. I'd also like to thank Elizabeth Rose, Deputy Chancellor Division of Operations at the DOE and Lorraine Grillo, President of the SCA for coming to testify before the Committee today. And now I'm going to swear you in. So I ask you to please raise your right hand. Do you solemnly swear or affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth and to answer Council Member questions honestly?

ELIZABETH ROSE: I do.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Very good. And who would ever like to begin may begin.

ELIZABETH ROSE: I will begin. Thank you, Chair Dromm. Before I actually begin my formal testimony, I would like to acknowledge the concerns that you raised about the publishing of a revised amendment. We are very anxious to get a revised amendment to you. As my colleague Ray Orlando mentioned earlier this morning, we are working with OMB and with the Mayoral Administration on the

aligning SCA capital plan, our five year plan, with the citywide 10 year capital plan strategy, and as soon as that is completed, we will be publishing the revised plan. And we thank you for your patience.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you.

ELIZABETH ROSE: Good afternoon, Chair Dromm and members of the Education Committee. My name is Elizabeth Rose, Acting Deputy Chancellor for the Division of Operations at the New York City Department of Education. I am joined by Lorraine Grillo, President and Chief Executive Officer of the New York City School Construction Authority. We are pleased to be here today to discuss the November 2014 amendment to the Fiscal Year 2015 to 2019 Five Year Capital Plan, which builds upon the two previous planned investments of over 25 billion dollars and the resulting creation of over 109,000 seats since 2004. Since the last time we appeared before you to discuss the plan, we have opened 11 new sites, creating over 5,000 new seats for our students, and we are on track to open 42 new locations this September for an additional 13,324 seats in the 2015/2016 school year, including new pre-k sites. We are grateful to the City Council for its strong

support and generous funding to our schools. The 13.5 billion dollar Fiscal Year 2015 to 2019 Capital Plan will create tens of thousands of new seats in areas projected for enrollment growth, directly address overcrowding and this Administration's goal of creating additional high quality full day pre-kindergarten seats. The plan also targets the reduction of class size and much needed improvements for our again infrastructure. The plan is funded by state and city tax levy and 783 million dollars in proceeds from the New York State's Smart Schools Bond Act. As many of you know, we develop and annual amendment process beginning in the 2005/2009 plan. Regularly reviewing our capital plan allows us to identify emerging needs quickly and gives us the opportunity to make changes as necessary. To track changing needs, we conduct an annual building condition assessment survey in which we send architects and engineers to evaluate our approximately 1,311 buildings which excludes transportable classroom units other buildings that do not have student capacity. This survey generates our needs for capital investment projects to maintain our buildings in good repair. We also updated enrollment

projections annually. These projections incorporate data on birth rates, immigration rates and migration rates from various city agencies. Additional agencies provide statistics on housing starts and rezoning efforts. Using a broad range of sources provides a complete view of potential student demand, and annual updates allow us to make timely adjustments when there is a sustained increase in student population in one part of the city or a decline in student population in another. These enrollment projections, which are performed on a district and sub-district level, help inform our need for new capacity projects. In addition to evaluating our school buildings and student population, public feedback plays a crucial role in our capital planning process. Each year, we undertake a public review process with community education councils, the City Council and other elected officials and community groups. We offer every CEC in the city the opportunity to conduct a public hearing on the plan, and we partner with individual Council Members and CEC's to identify local needs. Your insights in this process are essential and we look forward to our continued partnership. Public feedback has also

played a significant role as we've convened the Blue Book Working Group and listened to active community representatives who have voiced longstanding concerns regarding the way school space is used and how capacity is measured and reflected in the Blue Book. Last Spring, Chancellor Farina established the Blue Book Working Group, which has focused its work on understanding the underlying formulas that determine current Blue Book capacity figures and discussing recommendations that would improve the way we calculate capacity and ensure our communities understand how school space is used. Changes we have already implemented as a result of this group's recommendations include adjusting the Blue Book formula so that enrollment in transportable classroom units, commonly known as TCU's, is now included in the main building's total enrollment and creating a more user friendly Blue Book format for school communities. The group recently submitted its recommendations and they are under review. The proposed November 2014 amendment includes 4.5 billion dollars per capacity, 5.3 billion for capital investment and 3.7 billion for mandated programs. The proposed Fiscal Year 2015/2019 plan creates over

32,600 seats which address overcrowding as well as two new Administration priorities, pre-kindergarten expansion and a class size reduction initiative. Two hundred and 10 million has been allocated for a vital increase in the number of pre-k seats and there may be future funding adjustments in this category as we continue identifying additional pre-k seats. To date, we have identified 28 projects, yielding nearly 3,100 new seats in new locations in the five boroughs. Of the 4.5 billion allocated to capacity, 3.45 billion is dedicated to creating more than 32,600 new seats in an estimated 61 projects within school districts experiencing the most critical existing and projected overcrowding. Ten projects have recently been identified, including the Curtis High School addition on Staten Island, a PS 32 addition in Brooklyn, PS 14 and PS 46 additions in the Bronx, additions to PS 24, 303, 19, and 49 in Queens, ISHS 336, also known as St. Fidelis in Queens, and High School 859 in Queens. In addition, 490 million is allocated to address class size reduction and 350 million to replace facilities where leases expire during this plan. Nearly 70 percent of the 5.3 billion capital investment allocation will

address the buildings identified in our annual building survey as most in need of repair, such as roof and structural repairs, safeguarding our buildings against water infiltration and other facility projects. The capital investment category also includes funding for upgrades to fire alarms, public address systems and removal of TCU's. The remaining 30 percent or 1.64 building will go toward upgrading instructional spaces in existing buildings such as the restructuring of classrooms for pre-kindergarten use, upgrades to physical fitness rooms, libraries, middle school science labs, bathrooms and auditoriums, and technology upgrades. I would like to speak more about two of these areas, bathrooms and science labs. In previous hearings, many members of the council have asked about bathroom upgrades and spoken about the popularity of Reso A funded bathroom upgrade projects. While all our schools have functional bathrooms, in this proposed capital plan amendment, we have allocated 100 million dollars in funding to pilot bathroom upgrade program that will improve the attractiveness of our school bathrooms. In the prior capital plan, ensuring all high school students had access to a science lab was a priority,

and we're happy to report that we have succeeded in this goal. Now we are able to turn our focus to middle school students. To that end, we have allocated 50 million dollars to upgrade middle school science labs to improve science instruction for middle school students. In order for our students to become college and career ready in a digital and information age, we will make certain that technology upgrades remain a priority in the proposed amended plan. We're committed to bridging any existing gaps in technology in our schools. Specifically, 505 million dollars of the technology spending under this plan will build on our school building's core technology infrastructure. This funding allows us to continue to transform our school environments from industrial age to information age schools where learning can be customized to each child's unique needs. Over the next five years, essential upgrades and incorporation of next generation broadband, wireless and learning technologies are planned for all school buildings. Additionally, approximately 145 million will be invested in upgrading legacy systems such as student information systems, improving enterprise level learning platforms,

developing new data systems and upgrading business operation systems in support of school needs. The total cost to support the city's effort to remove and replace all polychlorinated biphenyl, PCB, containing lighting fixtures throughout the entire school system is approximately a billion dollars, about half of which was covered by the previous five year capital plan. The proposed 2014 amendment allocates 480 million dollars to replace all remaining lighting fixtures in our schools by December 2016. The mandated programs category also includes approximately 750 million for boiler conversions and approximately 125 buildings currently using number four oil. The remaining funds were assigned to cover other required costs, including insurance and completion of projects from the prior plan. The capital plan also includes funding for this Administration's priority to remove all transportable classroom units from the system and to reduce class sizes. Specifically, 480 million has been allocated to remove TCU's and redevelop the yard space where the TCU's are located. Since October 2013, we have removed 47 TCU's and have developed plans to remove 94 additional TCU's. We are also working with

principals and superintendents to develop plans to enable the removal of the remaining 211 TCU's. Plans include building new capacity in overcrowded areas, supporting schools to better utilize the space in their main buildings and assessing the need for potential changes to zoning or other enrollment adjustments. We understand that the public school system as a whole continues to experience pockets of overcrowding and we are working to address these concerns through new school construction. We remain focused on remedying these issues and will continue to rely on your feedback and support as we do so. Our annual capital planning process has already benefitted significantly from your input and our students have benefited from your generous support on the capital projects. With continued collaboration and tens of thousands of seats slated to come online over the next five to seven years, we remain confident that the expansion and enhancement of school buildings across the five boroughs will include the educational experience for the city's 1.1 million school children as well as the teachers and staff who serve them. Thank you again for allowing for us to testify today. I am now going to turn over

to Lorraine Grillo to give a presentation on the plan.

LORRAINE GRILLO: Thank you, Deputy Chancellor and thank you, Chair Dromm and the members of the committee. We appreciate you allowing us to be here today. I would like to present to you the overview of the November proposed plan. It was adopted in 2014 and this is the proposed amendment that we put out in November. It is 13.5 billion, and it includes--it is an increase of 700 million dollars which includes City Council and Borough President appropriations as well as additional funding for Sandy projects, and then roll over funding for boiler conversions. The highlights of the November amendment include 783 million dollars from the Smart Schools Bond Act to potentially fund technology expansion of pre-kindergarten seat creation and the removal of transportable classroom units, 210 million for the creation of new pre-k seats, funds for the removal of all transportable classroom units, ensure that all middle school students have access to science facilities, and 100 million allocated for student bathroom upgrades. This is the breakdown, 4.5 in capacity programs, 5.3 billion capital

investments, and 3.7 billion in mandated programs.

In the capacity program, 3.45 billion is for the creation of approximately 33,000 seats, 210 million dollars, and as the Deputy Chancellor mentioned, that number could change because initially it was for 2,900 seats. We've already cited 3,100 seats. Class size reduction program is 490 million, and facility replacement 350 million. Seventy existing leases that we currently have will be expiring during this five year capital plan. We have to prepare for that. Again, 32,629 seats, the bulk of those seats are in the PSIS school buildings, 26,000 seats, and we have 3,100 high school school buildings. One PSIS with 806 seats will be funded for design in this plan. So we've really basically kept the number of seats to be created pretty much the same as it had been in the prior plan. And again, this is by district. We don't have to go through that. And these are the various sites that we found--we've created in pre-k with their addresses. The capital improvement section for 3.3 billion includes 2.7 billion for building systems. We do this through evaluating each building every year with our building condition assessment survey, which the Deputy Chancellor

mentioned where we take a team of architects and engineers out to every single building and they rate the major systems within the building one through five, five being the worst. And then of course, the removal of transportable classroom units, and athletic field upgrades, 125 million. We did include a 1.6 billion for school enhancements, including restructuring as we explained earlier, some of that for restructuring classrooms to suit pre-k needs, and then 100 million dollars for safety, which includes the video surveillance cameras, 50 million dollars for the middle school science lab upgrades. Accessibility, 100 million. Another 115 million for physical fitness, libraries and auditorium upgrades. The bathroom upgrades that we talked about earlier, 100 million dollars and 650 million dollars in technology. And again, our mandated programs include PCB lighting replacements, 480 million. Seven hundred and 50 million dollars for 125 buildings with boilers that now burn number four oil. Eight hundred and 30 million dollars for wrap-up insurance, and 660 million for prior planned completion, projects that started in the last plan. And again, these are some of the programs, some of the capital investment and

mandated programs that we will undertake during this plan. And these are the 47 TCU removals that we did so far, and these are the 94 TCU sites that we have identified for removal so far. Again, these are-- this is my favorite part where we show off all the beautiful buildings that we were able to build or those that are in construction. And again, our famous Net Zero Energy building which will be opening this September. And we're happy to answer any questions that you might have.

[off mic]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, well thank you very much for coming in and for your testimony. I want to just start off with a couple of questions around the Smart Schools Bond Act money that we're going to be getting. So, I think that it's roughly about 783 million dollars that we're expecting, but could you walk us through the process of approval for the Smart Schools Bond Act funding? What has to go on for that to happen?

LORRAINE GRILLO: Mr. Chairman, we have yet to receive guidance from the state on that. We do know the general parameters which have--which include issues like transportable classroom removal,

1
2 technology, pre-k, safety and security, but other
3 than that we don't yet have a timeline really any
4 guidance.

5 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So, we don't even
6 know at this point when our proposal would have to be
7 submitted? I'm assuming there's a proposal that has
8 to be put forward.

9 LORRAINE GRILLO: Correct.

10 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Interesting to say
11 the least. Have we ever gotten to the point where we
12 may be able to use tablets or purchase tablets for
13 that? I mean, that's a way in which some funding is
14 going to be used in other areas around the state, but
15 I believe in New York City we don't have the ability
16 to do that. Are we still waiting to hear from the
17 state on that? Or is there an educational philosophy
18 difference with that in terms of the Department? Or
19 where do we stand with that actually?

20 LING TAN: The--

21 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: [interposing] And can
22 you just identify yourself. I think I have to swear
23 you in also.

24 LING TAN: My name is--
25

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Can I ask you just to raise your right hand? Do you solemnly swear or affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth and to answer Council Member questions honestly?

LING TAN: Yes, I do.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you.

LING TAN: My name is Ling Tan. I'm the Executive Director for Capital and Reimbursable Program for Department of Education Office of the CFO. In terms of the, I believe, eligibility of the tablet, we're still waiting for guidance because it's a bond receipt [sic]. New York City directive term [sic], the bond receipt [sic] does not allow that because of the useful life which is less than five years right now. So, that eligibility is dependent on the state funding and that should be part of the guidance once it comes up as a device.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So, why is New York City different than other municipalities around the country in terms of that?

LING TAN: That's, as explained to me by OMB Finance, is because we have to adhere to the general accounting principle and also the state and

the city charter relating to a minimum of useful life of five years for every equipment purchase with the capital dollars.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So I've met with the Comptroller on this issues, and I've urged him to look at that rule to see how we can change that, because I think that especially in District 75 schools or where there are special education students, many of these tools could be used as assistive learning devices and would be beneficial to our students as well, and I look forward to continuing to have that discussion with him, particularly because it can be used in that way in other districts around the state, and I think it would be unfair if we don't have that opportunity here as well for our students for learning. Okay, so let me just move onto some of the testimony by Deputy Chancellor Rose. In your testimony on page four, you mention that you've removed 47 TCU's and 94 additional TCU's, you've developed plans to remove them. That's a little different than the figures we had. We had 35 and 81. Is that because you have done more now since we last spoke, or what is, why is that different?

ELIZABETH ROSE: We are continuing to develop our plans and wanted to give you the most up to date figures, and I think we also spoke about these figures at our overcrowding hearing a few weeks ago. So, we also like to be consistent with what we've said most--

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: [interposing] And you used those figures at that time as well?

ELIZABETH ROSE: Yes, we did.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, I'm sorry. I didn't pick that up. Okay, good. Does primary and elementary schools, I noticed that there's an awful large number of primary and elementary schools in the plan. That continues to be our area of greatest need rather than high schools or junior high schools.

LORRAINE GRILLO: That's correct. But in the borough of Queens we continue to see overcrowding in our high schools.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: In the high schools as well. Because that's what I see, obviously, since I'm from Queens that there remains a need for high schools. Is there a plan to look for sites? Would you consider doing smaller high schools? You know, some of the high schools are built with a thousand,

2,000, 3,000 students in mind. There may be sites where we could do smaller schools, and actually that kind of fits in with the philosophy in some ways with the Department as well.

LORRAINE GRILLO: Right. We are always actively looking for sites for high schools and right now we have several in the pipeline that will begin the process. As we begin to negotiate with the landlords and the owners, we will let you know. And yes, we are looking for those sites that would not necessarily house a thousand seats. We would certainly go smaller than that.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, good. I noticed also in Deputy Chancellor Rose's testimony, the comments that you made about the Blue Book, and I'm really grateful to see that we're getting a more accurate number of students by moving the students that were in the TCU's and counting them as part of the overall populations of the schools. And I think it's really important that we're honest about that if we're really going to address the needs of overcrowding. So that being said, I think that you said that--yeah, well you did say. So, how many--how does that effect the overall enrollment? Have you

seen an increase now for the need for seats now that those TCU's are being included in buildings?

ELIZABETH ROSE: So, in the projections that we used for our capacity needs, we have never counted the capacity of the TCU's in those projections. So, in some ways the Blue book is effectively catching up to what we've always done in projecting seat need for capital planning purposes. We do see an increase in the number, a small increase in the number of buildings that will show as over utilized in the Blue Book, but in terms of our total seat need, we had already effectively eliminated the TCU capacity in making our capital need projections.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So, overcrowding in the school doesn't necessarily translate into need for additional seats?

ELIZABETH ROSE: So, it ha--we look at the sub-district level, and so we look at both what are the pockets of overcrowding but also are there seats available in the whole sub-district. And so we first look for what are all the opportunities that we can use to better use the capacity that we already have that may be underutilized, and then when we see no additional opportunity, that's when we would look

1
2 for new capital, new capacity investment to address
3 the need.

4 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So would that also
5 include situations like where you have annexes that
6 are using Catholic schools and you're renting, or you
7 say that that's a seat created, or how is that
8 factored into your estimate?

9 ELIZABETH ROSE: If we are leasing a
10 former parochial school, we now include that in our
11 permanent capacity.

12 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. I'm going to go
13 to Council Member Barron, Chin and then Johnson, and
14 then I want to come back with other questions as
15 well.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you, Mr.
17 Chair. Thank you to the panel for coming. I have
18 questions about--well, let's start with the state
19 money that's due to the city under the CFE. We know
20 that our legislators in Albany are fighting fiercely
21 for that and we are expecting that there will be a
22 sizable amount that will be coming to New York City.
23 How are you planning to use that money? Because the
24 last time there were hopes of that money coming, the
25 previous mayor said that he was going to put it into

1 the general fund and disperse it around, whereas that
2 money is actually targeted for a specific
3 shortcomings in the system. So, should we get a
4 sizable amount of money as a part of the CFE
5 settlement? How will that be utilized and how are
6 you going to ensure that that happens?

8 ELIZABETH ROSE: Well, I would wish that I
9 had our CFO, Ray Orlando, with me who was here to
10 speak with you earlier this morning. As that money
11 is expense money rather than capital funding, and so
12 we would anticipate that those funds would be used to
13 support school budgets such that they could hire
14 additional staff either to reduce class sizes or to
15 simply increase the staff to student ratios.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Okay. In terms of
17 the money that's nee--the last hearing that the Chair
18 had, I asked the question about the creation of
19 technology labs, computer labs, and the panelist
20 whose name I didn't recall said that the DOE is
21 moving away from the policy of having computer labs
22 and moving towards having computers in the classroom,
23 and I was surprised to hear that, because if we're
24 talking about STEM and we're talking about those
25 kinds of programs, I don't know that classroom

1 teachers are qualified to teach children how to do
2 coding and use the technology to that level. So, is
3 that the policy that you will not be establishing
4 upgrades or building technology computer labs in
5 schools, because that's what was said at the last
6 hearing?

8 ELIZABETH ROSE: So, actually, since I was
9 the person who responded to your question, let me
10 clarify.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Oh, glad you
12 remembered.

13 ELIZABETH ROSE: Let me clarify the
14 response.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you.

16 ELIZABETH ROSE: We do--we look to the
17 principals of schools to determine how they would
18 best like to utilize their space. And so in their
19 cluster spaces, they have the opportunity to choose
20 to use cluster rooms as music rooms or art rooms or
21 computer labs or any other type of cluster activity
22 that they deem appropriate. We are encouraging
23 schools to use computers in classrooms more than
24 creating completely separate new technology labs
25 because we want computers to be part of ongoing

1 instruction and part of mainstream education. There
2 is no reason why principals who have particular
3 courses could not continue to have a computer lab as
4 one of their cluster spaces. So we are not
5 preventing principals from doing that.

6
7 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: So as a principal
8 might want to in fact install a computer lab, because
9 I visited my schools, and many of them need upgrades.
10 The equipment is there, but they need to in fact have
11 a person who's trained and competent to do that, and
12 the lab itself needs upgrades. Would that be a part
13 of the capital request that would come? Is that
14 something that your office would look at? And what's
15 the average cost or the range of cost for making that
16 happen?

17 ELIZABETH ROSE: So the component that is
18 part of the capital plan would be the electrical
19 capacity upgrades that might be needed for those
20 rooms. Lorraine, can I--

21 LORRAINE GRILLO: [interposing] No,
22 you're absolutely right. Yes, the infrastructure
23 piece of that would be a capital upgrade. And again,
24 we do these often times, and you know, mostly through
25 the generosity of the City Council Members, yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: But don't you think that's something the DOE should provide? Because, yes, as Council Members--

LORRAINE GRILLO: [interposing] Where we--

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: [interposing] we do that.

LORRAINE GRILLO: Where we can, we certainly do.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: But if you're talking about STEM being a focus, I would think that you, that it would be beneficial to have money put in the budget so that as principals say, "Okay, my technology lab, my computer lab is really antiquated, and I need to have that." Just as you're talking about upgrading bathrooms and installing sign slabs, I would think that that would be something if we're talking about having effective program in STEM that would be done. As a principal, I know that I had two technology labs, two computer teachers who were trained, and I know that beyond those two persons on staff, my classroom teachers did not have the background to encourage children to explore what it is that computers can do.

1
2 LING TAN: So, a lot of the principal
3 that does computer lab is based on the curriculum
4 program in a school. So there is no centralized
5 program across all the school buildings, so it's
6 really up to each principal to indicate what they
7 need, and the reason on the upgrade not across the
8 board is that we don't actually track what the class
9 use of each school is because is really the
10 principal's space to do it. Where they have met
11 request especially to Reso A on the upgrade, we do,
12 and then centrally on the capital plan, if there's a
13 heavy lift in terms of upgrading the electrical, we
14 do go to SCA to--which is usually the bigger problem,
15 because the use in the school, they do have other
16 funding sources in the school, especially for PD,
17 which is push out to the school, and the principal
18 has total say on that piece. So, one of the issues,
19 unlike [sic] the bathrooms, there's no centralized
20 program, because it's not consistent across all the
21 school--

22 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: [interposing] Do
23 you know which schools have computer labs that are
24 functioning?
25

LING TAN: We know a handful of them, the ones that we have upgraded through the principal, but I don't know across the board.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: So there's no data that captures which schools have functioning computer labs?

LING TAN: No.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: I think that might be something that would be helpful for us to know in terms of making an assessment of where we are if we're pushing STEM as a means of getting our children into being--into that workforce.

ELIZABETH ROSE: I believe, actually, that the information is included as part of the Local Law 60 report. WE can double check on that.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Okay. And next, moving onto the TCU's. There's a school in my district, East New York Family Academy, which I believe is in a leased space, and half of the student population is housed in TCU's. I don't see any provision in your plans for school to accommodate this high school once those TCU's are gone. The children cannot in anyway fit into the main building, which is already overcrowded.

ELIZABETH ROSE: So, we are reaching out to work with superintendents and principals of all the 211 TCU's that do not yet have an identified plan for removal to discuss the potential options and what would be required to enable us to remove those TCU's. We are certainly not going to remove TCU's before we have worked with the community and know what will happen to those students.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Where in your plan do you anticipate? The TCU's, a time table for removing all of them is when?

ELIZABETH ROSE: So, we are--as we identify plans for removal we are adding them to the capital plan, and we'll be able to provide approximate dates for those specific TCU's, but our focus is on ensuring that we have a plan that works for each school and each community to ensure that those students are accommodated before we remove those TCU's.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: And how would they be accommodated, in the example of East New York Family Academy, if they're already in a leased building and there are no other buildings in the community in that immediate area? How will be they

accommodated if they are not even plans here to build a high school to accommodate that, that program?

ELIZABETH ROSE: So, there we could potentially look at other buildings where we might have available capacity we can potentially look at as we're thinking about lease replacement opportunities. We would be looking for other sites that might make sense for those students, but to keep the school and the community served.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Okay. If in fact--where in your time table would that happen? Because all TCU's are supposed to be removed as of what date?

ELIZABETH ROSE: So, we don't have a specific deadline for when they will all be removed. Our goal is to ensure--

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: [interposing] Oh, I thought there was a deadline for the plan--

ELIZABETH ROSE: [interposing] that we have a plan. We have--

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: [interposing] for the removal of all TCU's.

ELIZABETH ROSE: We have funded the removal of all TCU's in this plan, and we are working

very hard to develop the plans for each TCU to remove them.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: SO you don't have an end date for all TCU's to be removed?

ELIZABETH ROSE: We are focused very much on ensuring we have a plan ideally within this capital plan period, yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: But no end date by which we can say by the year 2020 they'll all be gone?

ELIZABETH ROSE: So, in some cases we know that TCU's will be dependent upon new capacity that we have identified in this plan. When we have the dates for when that new capacity will be completed, then we will know the date when we would be able to remove those TCU's.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Okay. Mr. Chair, I think that we need to get an end date so that this is not something that drags on and on and on. Perhaps we can sit and work with DOE so that that happens, because in an instance such as the one that I've talked about, there are no plans for a new school. I'm very familiar with the community. There's not a building that I know of that could

1
2 house this population, but yet, and still we don't
3 have an end date. We don't have a date for the
4 removal, and there are no plans in here to say that
5 we want to build a new high school. So that's
6 something that I'm very concerned about. I think
7 that--oh, when you talk about athletic upgrades, 125
8 million dollars, is that only schools that have
9 athletic fields, or are you also talking about the
10 playgrounds? What's included in that athletic
11 upgrade?

12 LORRAINE GRILLO: In the athletic--well,
13 first of all, in the athletic upgrade universe, about
14 I'd say 20 years ago or so, 15 years ago, a group
15 called Take the Field installed athletic fields in a
16 number of schools, probably 30 of them. The lifespan
17 of these fields is typically 10 to 12 years. Well,
18 we've passed that point. So a great number of them
19 need to be upgraded. In addition, it does include
20 some playground upgrades as well.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Can you give me
22 an idea of what portion of, what percentage?

23 LORRAINE GRILLO: I would say the bulk of
24 this is with the athletic field upgrades.
25

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: And is that a partnership that which you have--that you have with--no, it's not?

LORRAINE GRILLO: Not--it was. It was.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: it was.

LORRAINE GRILLO: It was very successful, but they no longer exist as a group.

COMMISSIONER BANKS: Okay, thank you very much.

LORRAINE GRILLO: Okay, thank you very much, Council Member Barron. And Council Member Chin followed by Johnson and then Kallos.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you, Chair. Deputy Chancellor and President Grillo, it's really great to see the Pecsub [sic] School picture that is going to be ready by September of community. It's very exciting. Even some people who said they don't believe it, but I guess with the picture and also the DOE citing some temporary pre-k seats there, that I think there's definitely going to be open, right?

LORRAINE GRILLO: Yes, Council Member Chin, that will definitely open for September.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Okay. So, we want to make sure that it's on the record. We're very

1 happy that we have additional seats that were added,
2 and we've been advocating for a new site, and parents
3 have formed an advocacy group called Build School
4 Now, and they have submitted a list of potential site
5 to DOE and SCA, but they haven't heard back. Is
6 there any time frame where you'll be able to get back
7 to the parents about the different sites that they
8 have identified?

10 LORRAINE GRILLO: I have not seen the list
11 myself, but I can tell you that any time we get a
12 suggestion for a site in a district where there is a
13 need, we follow up immediately. So, I'll check with
14 my real estate folks and get back to you.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Okay, because it was
16 submitted a while back. The other issue is I think I
17 asked you at the last hearing. But finding site is
18 so difficult. Is SCA looking at potential of using
19 imminent domain to take some of the sites to use it
20 for school?

21 LORRAINE GRILLO: Absolutely.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: So, when you look at
23 some of the sites, because some of these developers,
24 they're waiting, you know, they're waiting for the
25 highest bidder, and they're holding onto site that

could be used for potential school. So, I think we really need to send a strong message that for public good, we need to exercise that option.

LORRAINE GRILLO: And we certainly use that option when it's necessary. As a matter of fact, we've initiated in two particular sites just very recently.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Can you tell us those sites?

LORRAINE GRILLO: I prefer if we could speak about that privately.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Okay, alright. I know that in the pre-kindergarten site that was identified in our district one is one Washington Street and one is on Two Lafayette, and I see that the Two Lafayette site is anticipate to open in January instead of September?

LORRAINE GRILLO: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Because when we got the list from DOE, we assumed that all these seats will be open in September, all these new pre-k seats.

LORRAINE GRILLO: The initiative to find sites for pre-k has been ongoing, and the ones that we were able to identify earliest are the ones that

1 we were confident could open in September, but we
2 still are continuing to look, and where we can, we
3 are opening in January and then the following
4 September as well.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: So, on the site at
6 the Washington Street, what is the DOE doing? Did
7 DOE purchase the site or are they just renting the
8 space, and--

9 LORRAINE GRILLO: [interposing] That's a
10 lease. That's a lease space.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: That's a lease
12 space.

13 LORRAINE GRILLO: Right.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: What's the cost of
15 the rent?

16 LORRAINE GRILLO: I don't have that in
17 front of me, but I can certainly get that to you.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Yeah, because that
19 is one of my concerns too in terms of the renting of
20 facility, because one of the school that we have in
21 our district, the middle school, the Lower Manhattan
22 Middle School, they're in a nice building. I mean,
23 they're in the same building as the Richard Green
24 High School as another school in there, but they're
25

1
2 paying over five million dollars a year for the
3 lease, over five million. And then it increases
4 after a couple of year, and then it goes as high as
5 over seven million dollars a year. I mean, that's a
6 lot of money--

7 LORRAINE GRILLO: [interposing] We agree.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: to rent this space.
9 So that's what we have to look at in terms of
10 building a new school versus leasing space,
11 especially in areas where the rents are so high, and
12 also, you know, landlords and developers are looking
13 to get it out of the city. I didn't realize it was--
14 we were able to get a copy of it. It's--I mean, if
15 you calculate it by 30 years, that's like almost
16 close to 200 million dollars.

17 LORRAINE GRILLO: Again, we don't disagree
18 that some of these leases are very expensive, but the
19 need is very great. And when you cannot find sites
20 to purchase, sometimes this is the only alternative
21 we have.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Well, I mean, we
23 talked about imminent domain, I think we really need
24 to seriously look at that, especially when the
25 mayor's talking about, you know, building more

1 affordable housing. At the same time, more market
2 rate housing are being built, and in a lot of
3 districts, especially down here, lot of buildings are
4 going up as-of-right, and they're not contributing to
5 the city, but they're adding to the overcrowding of
6 our school. And so, we really need to figure out a
7 way of getting them to put in. So, I look forward to
8 really working with you on this issue.

10 LORRAINE GRILLO: Thank you.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you, Chair.

12 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. Council
13 Member Johnson?

14 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Thank you, Chair
15 Dromm. You're like the marathon man with this
16 hearing since this morning until I know the end of
17 today, so thank you for being generous to the other
18 members with time to speak. I thank you, Deputy
19 Chancellor and President Grillo for being here. I
20 know we're supposed to get together later this week,
21 and I look forward to that. I just want to first of
22 all say to President Grillo, and I'm sure you know
23 this, Deputy Chancellor Rose, but I think it's
24 important to say on the record, the community process
25 around 75 Morton Street over the past seven years,

1 since the building was identified has been
2 phenomenal, and Lorraine and her team Melanie LaRocca
3 [sp?] have done an unbelievable job engaging the
4 local community. I think it's been a model. It
5 hasn't been perfect, nothing is, but it has been
6 close to perfect, and people are very, very, very
7 excited for this brand new middle school that the
8 community has fought for for the past seven or eight
9 years. So, I want to start with that before I ask
10 the tough questions.

11
12 ELIZABETH ROSE: Can we just say thank
13 you. That kind of feedback is wonderful to hear and
14 we really appreciate hearing the positives, because
15 we certainly always hear the negatives. So, thank
16 you very much.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: No, it's been
18 great.

19 ELIZABETH ROSE: They're doing a terrific
20 job.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Thank you. I'm
22 deeply appreciative as I know the other elected
23 officials at CEC and the parents are. So, after
24 saying that, I just want to say, and we're going to
25 talk about this on Friday, and this isn't--I'm not

doing this to try to publicly embarrass anyone. I've been just visiting all of the local schools, which has been great visiting with students and principals, PTA presidents, parent coordinators, and the one thing that each one of them tell me no matter what school I go to, and I've been to I think every elementary school in my district now in the past three months, is they take me and they show me the bathrooms and the ceilings and the trip hazards on the floor with the linoleum coming up and the uneven pavement on the playgrounds and the play equipment that is sharp and dangerous and hasn't been replaced in years. And so, I put together this list with every single school with photos, and you can't see it, but when you see the photos it's sort of shocking. You think like third graders are using these bathrooms? It's hard to understand and believe. So when I saw that 100 million dollars was put in for bathroom renovations and upgrades, that's great. I want to know how that gets prioritized, how decisions are made, how quickly it happens. Because in many of these circumstances that I've--when I put this long packet together, this isn't cosmetic actually. I mean, it's like dangerous for these small kids. So,

1 I want to understand how decisions are made on making
2 these upgrades. I know, Lorraine, that you all have a
3 facilities team as well, that if there is a dangerous
4 condition besides dealing with the five year capital
5 plan, it can be--someone can be sent out and a
6 dangerous condition can be taken care of right away.
7 And I think some of these probably qualify for that.
8 Last night I had my participatory budgeting expo.
9 You know, we're giving out a million dollars that the
10 community decides how it's going to be spent, and the
11 majority of the people that were at my expo last
12 night were middle schoolers, and they were there
13 asking that their bathrooms be fixed, and they
14 brought photos. They had photos of students with cut
15 hands from using facilities. So, this is serious,
16 and I want to understand what the process is to
17 getting these fixed as quickly as possible.

18 LORRAINE GRILLO: Okay. Well, I'll
19 respond to part of that. I look forward to our
20 meeting actually, and I look forward to working with
21 you on all of these issues. Elizabeth, you want to?

22 ELIZABETH ROSE: SO, I'll add a little
23 bit of detail to the bathroom renovation projects.
24
25

1
2 So, we are expecting for Fiscal Year 15 to complete
3 127 or 128 bathroom renovation projects.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: How does one get
5 on that list?

6 ELIZABETH ROSE: So, our division of
7 school facilities which manages the custodial staff
8 is prioritizing bathrooms of the schools for these
9 projects. And it's based on the need and condition
10 and in consultation with the principals.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Well, I'm ready
12 to go with that team to these schools as soon as
13 possible. I'll go with them. We can schedule the
14 appointment. I'm serious.

15 ELIZABETH ROSE: No, and absolutely
16 please send us your list of--

17 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: [interposing] But
18 I'll walk with these engineers and they can tell me
19 if they don't think this warrants an immediate fix.

20 ELIZABETH ROSE: Yeah. And what I can
21 tell you is that the scope of work includes new wall
22 and floor tile, new bathroom fixtures, new toilet
23 partitions, new lights, new entrance door. We're
24 required painting. We're required covers for
25 radiators. We're required painting. We're required

1 covers for radiators, we're required, and that we're
2 very pleased with the progress that DSF is making. I
3 would also like to add that we are also getting--we
4 are ultimately going to be able to effect more than
5 100 million dollars in renovations because we also
6 received funds from the Department of Environmental
7 Protection to upgrade toilet facilities to lower
8 water fixtures, and so we are effectively getting
9 extra help in pursuing our bathroom upgrades and we
10 are trying to sort of manage across these two funding
11 streams as efficiently as we possibly can to get the
12 most impact we can.
13

14 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Okay, so I mean,
15 we'll go over this list on Friday. I look forward to
16 doing that and identifying which things get taken
17 care of immediately, but I'm not exaggerating or
18 being facetious when I say I will make an appointment
19 and I'll go with the engineers or the people that
20 make these decisions I'll take time out of my
21 schedule to go and look at each school, each
22 bathroom, each ceiling that's collapsing, each trip
23 hazard and have them explain to me. I want to be
24 included in this list, and I want to understand how
25

that decision gets made, if there's a scale, if it gets rent; I want to be part of that.

ELIZABETH ROSE: And I can look at some of the details and see. I think some of the schools that are in your district are already in progress. So, PS 33--

COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: [interposing]
Yes.

ELIZABETH ROSE: I believe is in your district, that one is complete. The building MO 17, which houses Lab Middle School and Lab High School is now complete. So some of those buildings are in fact being addressed as part of this project.

COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Thank you. And with this, Mr. Chair, I know at the beginning of-- there is a chart that does a breakdown by sub-district on the capacity program. In that, the Tribeca and Village section which Council Member Chin and I share, there's an additional need of 42 unfunded seats. I wanted to just understand where those seats are and what's the plan? The total identified was 1,970 for Tribeca in the Village. The December 2014 funded need was 1,928, and there's 42 seats that are unfunded.

1
2 LORRAINE GRILLO: I think that--oh, I'm
3 sorry. I think that in those cases when you see
4 numbers like 42, this is a matter of the program of
5 requirements. If we're able to fund a particular
6 school size with a particular number of students, you
7 may see that small number, you know, show up because
8 we weren't able to include those 42 seats within a
9 building that we've designed and built.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Okay. We're
11 excited about Beacon High School on 44th Street on
12 the same block as PS 51, but there is some serious
13 safety concerns on that block, because there are
14 bunch of different taxi automotive shops that double
15 park, and then there's the Hess gas station on the
16 corner, as you all know, and now with Beacon High
17 School moving there and with PS 51, we're going to
18 have over 1,000 school kids per day on that block.
19 And we need to, given the Mayor's Vision Zero plans
20 and the excitement surrounding this new school, I
21 think we all have to work together, DOE, SCA, my
22 office, and the parents and principals to ensure we
23 have a safety plan for when that school opens to
24 ensure no accident happens.
25

LORRAINE GRILLO: Right. And we typically work very closely with DOT on those issues before the school opens. So, hopefully we can all work together on that.

COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Thank you. I look forward to seeing you Friday. Thank you again very much.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much. And I want to just point out I believe the 50 million of the 100 million was given by the Council toward that effort. Am I correct on that?

ELIZABETH ROSE: I know it was requested by the Council very strongly, and we responded to the request.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay.

ELIZABETH ROSE: But I don't believe that it was given by the Council.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, okay. I'm sorry. We like to give and take credit for everything. I guess--

ELIZABETH ROSE: [interposing] there you go.

[cross-talk]

ELIZABETH ROSE: But we'll give you the credit.

LORRAINE GRILLO: But if you feel like it, if you're in the mood--

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: [interposing] Thank you for representing. I heard you mention about Environmental Protection going to give you some dollars for additional bathrooms. How many will that be, and do you know the dollar amount? And will it be included in the upcoming capital plan?

ELIZABETH ROSE: So, it is not in our capital plan. It is in their capital plan, and I can follow up with you on the dollars.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Will these be--will these be bathrooms that are in the condition that Council Member Johnson has talked about, or will these be--I mean, when you do a renovation, the toilets that you renovate are up to standards for water saving and stuff like that?

ELIZABETH ROSE: yes. So, when we put in new fixtures, we always knew up to date water saving fixtures.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So you might go into a school and do the toilet replacement, but not necessarily a whole upgrade in the bathroom.

ELIZABETH ROSE: Well, as I said, we are trying to optimize across these streams so that we can result in the most impact to bathrooms possible.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: What would be helpful is if Council Members could know where you intend to put that money so that there are additional res dollars that might be needed to do the bathroom upgrades, because we're very interested in doing that, because I do think it sends a message to kids when they have to go into an old bathroom like that. Maybe we can work together on adding that funding.

ELIZABETH ROSE: So, I'm delighted to say that we have a little real time answers here. The total funding from DEP is about 45 million dollars. So that's almost a 50 percent increase on top of what we are able to put in our capital plan, and we think that that will provide funding to change the fixtures in 427 schools.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Additional schools, is that--

ELIZABETH ROSE: I believe that is additional.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And do those schools also need an overall upgrade?

ELIZABETH ROSE: So, I don't believe that all 427 will get the full upgrade that we are funding with the 100 million from our capital plan. So we are trying to select where we spend our dollars very carefully so that we have the best, greatest impact across as many schools as possible.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And so where this, the direction of this conversation is going, I probably should have been a plumber, but--

ELIZABETH ROSE: [interposing] Yes.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Do these toilets include the urinals? I ask that because in some schools they're like troughs and they're not actually individual urinals, and I think that's an important upgrade as well.

ELIZABETH ROSE: Yeah, the word is fixtures, and yes, it includes urinals.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. And now I have another one for you. I spoke with the Chancellor recently about lunch room upgrades, and that is an

1 interesting idea as well. I didn't see it in any of
2 your testimony, but in alliance with what the
3 Chancellor's been talking about, creating, you know,
4 lunchrooms that are more receptive to student needs.
5 She suggested perhaps looking at different murals,
6 painting, repairs. I wonder if that's something that
7 we couldn't also look at in terms of placement of
8 Reso A dollars in the future.

10 ELIZABETH ROSE: We would be delighted
11 for additional Reso A dollars to help support
12 cafeteria upgrades, and cafeteria upgrades is
13 something that we have created a category for in the
14 plan this year.

15 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: It's in the where?

16 ELIZABETH ROSE: It is in the plan. It's
17 in the capital investment category, and I'm sure I'll
18 get a dollar amount in just a minute.

19 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I mean, I would
20 imagine it also depends on the size of the cafeteria,
21 but do you have an average amount?

22 ELIZABETH ROSE: Well, so I think it
23 depends very much on the size of the cafeteria, and
24 there are different--cafeterias have different needs.
25 So, for example, we have some cafeterias where

currently the service window is literally just that.

It's a window. You can only serve one student at a

time. It's slow. It's not particularly inviting.

So, a lot of our focus on these cafeteria upgrades is

on the service process to make this a more open and

welcoming environment, you know, that students will

feel, you know, excited about having lunch in them.

So, a lot of it is focused on the service aspect of

the cafeterias. And we have 25 million dollars in

the budget to address cafeteria serving lines and we

think that that will provide the ability to do

upgrades in about 45 buildings.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And in a school in my

district, in IS 230, the new school actually, is a

beautiful stand out mural designed. Would things like

that be able to be included in these upgrades? I

would assume so, if it was in--it was done in the

construction of this new building.

LORRAINE GRILLO: That actually, that

beautiful mural is part of the Percent [sic] for Art

Program that we include in all--

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: [interposing] Which

art program?

LORRAINE GRILLO: The Percent for Art.

And we include that in our new construction.

Unfortunately, that doesn't lend itself to capital upgrades so much. I would--

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: is there a way that some type of decorative additions could be made in a lunchroom upgrade, because I think that's really important to the look and the feel of those rooms, not just a flat wall.

ELIZABETH ROSE: So, I think it's something that we can consider, look at, try to assess, but we'd have to understand what is capital eligible, what is not, and we want to make sure we address the functionality of cafeterias as much as we can with the limited funds.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Let's continue this conversation, because--

ELIZABETH ROSE: [interposing] Absolutely.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: it's definitely something I'm interested in. I think other Council Members would be as well. I'm sorry, Council Member Kallos is next.

COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Thank you, again, to our committee Chair Danny Dromm for your

1 leadership on education issues both here in the city
2 and throughout our state and for this very long
3 hearing today. The Gov Ops went seven hours and 49
4 minutes, so that is just as a small challenge. I want
5 to just thank you for all that you do, and
6 specifically to Elizabeth Rose, I will be visiting PS
7 183 in the future and would love to have you join me.
8 And just as a disclosure, I represent her, so I have
9 to make sure that I am on best behavior. I want to
10 focus a little bit on community education District
11 Two. That's what I represent as well as Council
12 Member Chin, Council Member Johnson, Council Member
13 Mendez, and Council Member Garodnick. There's a lot
14 of us, and a lot of us came out today because our
15 district is higher needs than most would think, and
16 ultimately just try to make sure that we are asking
17 for the amount of funding that we need and making
18 sure that your agency is doing that as well as our
19 body. So, according to the December 2014 report, DOE
20 has identified a total need of 49,245 seats citywide.
21 The December plan included funding for construction
22 of 31,823 new seats, leaving an unfunded or partially
23 funded need for 16,616 and so by way of planning, I
24 feel--I'm concerned that we might be setting
25

ourselves up for failure. So if we have an identified need for 49,000 why not build 49,000 or perhaps more so that we actually don't have to worry about having schools that are overcrowded?

LORRAINE GRILLO: And while we would love to have more to build as many as possible, you know, we do have a lot of competing priorities and limited funding. So, it's that simple. We had to decide. We certainly have buildings, existing buildings that need capital improvement and a large portion of our plan had to address those issues. So, you know, we did what we included as far as the 32,000, was really as close as we could get to the number of seats that we accomplished in the last plan. We felt that that was a reasonable number, but again, it is a matter of competing priorities.

COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: I for one would say that I don't believe that there is a higher priority than education and investment in education returns several fold over our city's lifetime and we get our expense funding from income, and when people have a better education they earn more. So, how much would you need in order to be fully funded for your identified need?

LORRAINE GRILLO: We would need--what?

I'm sorry. An additionally, yes, we would need an additional 1.7 billion dollars, 1.7 billion more.

COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: That is great.

When I got elected we had 73 billion dollar expense budget. Now we have a 77.7 billion dollar expense budget. So as our expense budget continues to grow

and our capital budget also continues to grow, I

think we should be advocating for exactly as many

seats as we need. Along those same lines, I was

proud to work with so many of the people here to

fight for universal pre-k. I'm glad we got it. I was

disappointed that we got something like 50 seats in

Council District Five, and we actually lost pre-k

seats in the district with the closing of Rheinlander

[sp?], which was subsidized by the--by a foundation.

And so we actually had a net loss of pre-k seats.

When meeting with the Mayor, he indicated that he was willing to put temporary pre-k's in empty classrooms.

I have identified to the mayor and to the Department of Education several locations for universal pre-k

locations, and I know there is need because parents

keep asking me, "Can we use some of the vacant school

spaces?" I have a lot of new schools, so they are in

1 elementary school and they're now up to third grade,
2 but they have the second--the fourth and fifth grade
3 classroom is completely empty while they're waiting
4 to grow in, which means we have two years of
5 classrooms that we could use for pre-k at several
6 buildings. So, I guess I will ask again, can we get
7 pre-k in more spaces in my district for the much
8 greater need than 50 seats?
9

10 ELIZABETH ROSE: So, I'm going to guess
11 that you're referring to the Our Lady of Good Counsel
12 building in PS 527, I think.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Really impressive,
14 yes. It's not the only one. I also have another one
15 in the same, co-located with PS 158, and--

16 ELIZABETH ROSE: [interposing] Where the
17 middle school is phasing in.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Yes.

19 ELIZABETH ROSE: Alright. So, I will
20 certainly from this meeting go back and follow up
21 with Sophia Pappas who many of you met this morning,
22 she was here for the expense budget hearing, and
23 understand whether there's potential or what the
24 plans are for where there's an opportunity to use
25 some of that space on a temporary basis.

COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: I, with regard to building, I'm very pleased to see that community education District Two will be getting 3,190 new seats. I am slightly concerned, however, because we are putting in--we are--my district is getting raised and warehoused, and we're now in the age of the super scraper. So, in my district we're going to be getting a 900 foot tall building, 90 stories, which will likely have 900 units or something crazy like that, and we're seeing thousands and thousands of units of development, talking about tens of thousands in CEC Two, and yet, we're only building for 3,190. Would it be possible to make sure that our--that we are at least being able to see the equations and data that you are using to contemplate why we need so few seats while the city is about to undergo an unprecedented construction? And especially with the mayor's new zoning plan, which is going to encourage even more development, I don't think we can keep up.

LORRAINE GRILLO: Sure. Yes, I certainly--we'll certainly get that information to you, but in addition to that, we update these numbers. We do demographic studies every year to update and keep up with what has been unprecedented development, and

certainly we'll continue to look at that, but if you'd like to meet with us separately to go over these issues, we're happy to do it.

COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: If you can share the underlying demographic data that would be exceptional.

LORRAINE GRILLO: Sure.

COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: My last question is with regard to gifted and talented, and I think it falls on the special education spectrum because you have both needs. You have people, both are high needs populations and it's just for different ends of the spectrum, and so in 2013 there were 36,012 children who applied for gifted and talented, and of those, 25 percent are in the 90th percentile or above. We are truly an amazing city, and that comes out to 9,003. That is--I have a couple of schools with G&T in my district. I went to Bronx Science. I believe in gifted and talented programs. It's a good way to be somewhere for a little bit of time that nobody's going to beat you up for being a smart kid. I'm wondering if that was Margaret's experience as well. She also went to Bronx Science, but the

question is, all these schools have wait lists, can we actually build the 9,000 G&T seats that we need?

ELIZABETH ROSE: So, as the Chancellor said at District Two Town Hall a year ago, all of our schools in District Two are gifted and talented schools, because as you pointed out there are so many students who qualify that what you end up with is a very strong academic culture in all of the schools. What we find is that families who are applying to gifted and talented programs are very interested in a very few specific gifted and talented programs, and that if they don't get into those specific programs, they want to be at their zoned neighborhood school, and particularly in your Council District those schools are very strong and families are very happy with those local neighborhoods. So it's not that there are not a need for 9,000 additional seats, those students. It's a question of which schools those students choose to attend. There's capacity across the system for all the District Two students.

COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Thank you. And thank you to the Chair.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. I just want to follow up on that questioning about gifted

1 and talented. In District 30, for example, we don't
2 have enough seats. So there's a situation which I
3 think you're aware of where students attend the
4 school in Council Member Kallos' district on
5 Roosevelt Island. Those students cannot get bussing,
6 because they go to the school on Roosevelt Island,
7 which is technically Manhattan and another school
8 district. I think we spoke about this with former
9 Deputy Chancellor Kathleen Grimm as well, but that
10 number seems to be increasing from my district and
11 from Council Member Van Bramer, Council Member
12 Constantinides, and I would really like to relook at
13 that issue to see how we might be able to accommodate
14 those parents so that they can get some type of
15 transportation to go there, and would welcome a
16 discussion on that with you further.

17
18 ELIZABETH ROSE: I'd be happy to have a
19 separate discussion.

20 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. And in
21 terms of the future with the increase in population
22 in the city, the mayor's been talking about 200,000
23 units of affordable housing. Have we begun to think
24 about a plan how to deal with that? Will schools be
25 included in the affordable housing piece? Have we

LORRAINE GRILLO: Well, we are working very closely with City Planning on their, you know, neighborhood initiatives that they are working on, and our staff attends meetings with them on a regular basis. We talk about the plans for the future and what we need to develop as far as new schools are concerned. There's going to be obviously some changes as the years go by, because of the affordable housing initiative, and again, particularly in the several neighborhoods that the city has already designated as part of this neighborhood revitalization plan. And we are working very, very closely with them, and we anticipate that these schools would be included in future plans and amendments.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So, you know, at the Willis Point site, to use that as an example, there was planning for an elementary school to be placed there, but no plan made for the high school students. In other words, the kids that would attend--if and when that housing was every built or is every built,

1 those students would be able to have the elementary.
2 It think it's an elementary to eight now, if that's
3 still on the drawing board, but no high school. So I
4 would urge you that when we talk about affordable
5 housing that we take in the full length of the needs
6 of the students for schooling, not just the
7 elementary levels, and that be part of the overall
8 plan.
9

10 LORRAINE GRILLO: We're actually in that
11 particular area I'm familiar with it. We do have
12 some options that I would like to talk about
13 separately.

14 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Because I think those
15 students would have to be going to one of the local
16 schools otherwise, so.

17 LORRAINE GRILLO: Yep.

18 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. Just a few
19 more questions, because we did pretty good and I
20 think we had a successful overcrowding hearing not
21 too long ago. On page eight of the projected pre-
22 kindergarten sites it says that the number of seats
23 is now increased to 3,078 and the last report we had
24 was 2,880. Can you tell me where those additional
25 site are from the last report?

LORRAINE GRILLO: I don't have the comparison with me, but I think our report shows the various sites that we have identified.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I just don't see where it was different. I see the sites, because they're listed here, but I don't know which ones were the newly added, the extra 200.

LORRAINE GRILLO: Oh, I'm sorry. Oh, okay, alright. Yes, thank you. Actually, there's a new site in District Two on Lafayette Street that--

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: [interposing] Which one?

LORRAINE GRILLO: Lafayette Street.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay.

LORRAINE GRILLO: District Two. The site on Webster Avenue in District 10. There is a site now included in the Dock Street Development in District 13. There is a pre-k site there now. Two sites, the following two sites, Fifth Avenue and 71st Street both in District 20, these are the newest sites to be included. But again, we're working on this every day. So we include new sites regularly.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. Thank you for that information. Prior to me giving the opportunity

1
2 to other Council Members to ask questions we were
3 talking about how you project seat need, and I just
4 have a couple of more questions on that. How do you
5 factor in overcrowding into the projected seat needs?

6 ELIZABETH ROSE: So, we start with a
7 projection of the total enrollment, where do we think
8 the total demand is, and that's based on the
9 demographics. We add to that the additional demand
10 that we project based on housing development so that
11 you get to a total demand figure. We then compare
12 that total demand figure to our total capacity,
13 meaning our current capacity plus any new capacity
14 that is already in the plan in the pipeline. So,
15 existing overcrowding is factored in through the
16 comparison of the demand projection to the capacity.

17 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Does class size factor
18 into that formula?

19 ELIZABETH ROSE: So, it does, because
20 capacity is defined based on certain class sizes. So
21 it's based on the class size in grades K to three of
22 20 students per grade, in four through eight of 28
23 students per grade, and then in high schools I
24 believe--
25

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: [interposing] Thirty-four?

ELIZABETH ROSE: are 30.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thirty. The extra-- the additional 16,000 additional seats that are needed in the five year plan, how much would that cost to fund that?

LORRAINE GRILLO: An additional 1.7 billion.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: 1.7 billion.

LORRAINE GRILLO: Right.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. Just--did we do PCB lighting? I just want to go over that a little bit with you. In May of 2013, the DOE reduced the plan for replacing PCB containing lighting valence in schools from 10 years to five years. How has the shortened plan impacted the PCB remediation program and the cost of completing it?

LORRAINE GRILLO: Well, the number of schools is somewhere in the neighborhood of 747, I believe was the number, and we did accelerate the program, and we estimate the cost to be a billion dollars total. We are more than halfway completed with the replacements, and these projects are

1 ongoing. I cannot make a judgement as to the
2 difference in cost. We have certainly flooded the
3 market, but you know, these projects just continue to
4 push forward, and we intend to have everything
5 completed by December 2016.

6 ELIZABETH ROSE: If I could just add, I'd
7 say one of the impacts of this acceleration is on
8 summer school programs, schools that need to be
9 closed in the summers that might have previously
10 offered a summer school program, so we have to
11 relocate summer school, after school programs in
12 order to accommodate the night and weekend work that
13 we are doing both during the school year and full
14 building closures over the summer in order to
15 accomplish the compressed time frame. So, less clear
16 what the impact is on a dollar projection, but there
17 is a real impact on schools and students as we need
18 to literally close buildings to get these done.

19 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, and maybe for
20 the last question, and we'll follow up with the other
21 questions by letter or other forms of communication.
22 Charter schools, do you have an estimate of what the
23 cost of an additional hundred charter schools would
24

1
2 be to the city if the Governor's proposal was to go
3 through?

4 ELIZABETH ROSE: No, I do not. You know,
5 what--clearly there are different aspects to that,
6 including the per pupil tuition and whether or not we
7 have the ability to locate those schools in our
8 existing buildings or not. So there are a lot of
9 variables there.

10 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And Deputy Chancellor,
11 is it true--I believe it is true that the existing
12 charter schools who haven't expanded to their full
13 capacity could still expand and then we have to pick
14 up the cost for those seats, even if they're not
15 collocated they would have the right to use private
16 space, rental space that we would then be responsible
17 for. Am I correct?

18 ELIZABETH ROSE: Pretty much. So, any
19 schools that is expanding their grade levels are
20 eligible under the recent state legislation to apply
21 for space from the Department of Education. If we
22 are not able to provide them an offer of space, they
23 then are eligible to appeal to receive rental
24 reimbursement.
25

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And that cost, would it be about 40 million for the city? We'd have to pay the full cost up to about 40 million. Then there's a breakdown with the state of a 40, 60 percent division of the funding, but it still could rise to maybe 150 to 200 million according to some very informal estimates that I've heard.

ELIZABETH ROSE: I'm not familiar with those estimates.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Do you know what we're spending on rent right now?

ELIZABETH ROSE: So, pursuant to the state law, we have not yet had any expenditures. However, there are a number of charter schools who have not been able to receive space in a DOE building who have appealed and who have a judgement in their favor that the Department of Education would be required to provide rental assistance.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. I had asked the Chancellor some of those questions earlier as well, but just wanted to get a feel for what your thinking was on it as well. So, I think that's going to be about it for now. I thank you for coming in and for

sharing information, and I think that we have--we'll follow up with you in the letter form.

ELIZABETH ROSE: Great. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much. And this hearing will continue. I'd say let's--okay. Then we'll take a break until three, and then we will hear testimony beginning at three o'clock from the public.

[recess]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. Thank you. And we're back from our break. It is now 3:00 p.m., and I'm going to call the first group of witnesses, and we do have a lot of people that want to speak today in this public portion of this oversight hearing for the expense budget and the capital budget for the Department of Education. So welcome back, everybody, and let me start off by asking Evelyn DeJesus, the UFT Vice President for Education Policy to come up to testify. So, Evelyn, as you know, I swear everybody in at this hearing. So can I ask you to raise your right hand? Do you solemnly swear or affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth and to answer Council Member questions honestly?

EVELYN DEJESUS: I do.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, thank you.

EVELYN DEJESUS: So, good afternoon. My name is Evelyn DeJesus, and I am the Vice President of Education for the United Federation of Teachers, and it is a privilege for me to speak today on behalf of our members and our students whom we serve about how the city budget can be used to strengthen our schools and improve outcomes for our students. I want to thank Chairman Dromm and members of the Educational Committee for this opportunity as well as your tireless advocacy on behalf of the public schools in your districts and the all the districts, and our school communities are stronger thanks to you guys and to your leadership. This hearing comes at a pivotal time as we all know with negotiations on the state budget taking place as we speak. There are a lot at--there's a lot at stake in those discussions. For the last four months, the UFT has been engaged in public--in a public battle with Governor Cuomo over his discredited educational proposal and his making any increase in school and contingent on his agenda being adopted. The Governor's proposal for public schools are so counterproductive that the New York

Times accused him of engaging in political score settling rather than dealing with the central issue of school funding inequities. The core problem is that our Governor is refusing to acknowledge the landmark campaign for fiscal equity, CFE, settlement which obligates the state to provide New York City public schools with the funding necessary for all students to receive a sound basic education. Speaker Mark-Viverito and the Council have repeatedly and passionately spoken up about the need for the state to honor its obligations under the CFE settlement and for good reason. New York City schools will receive roughly 2,600 dollars more per pupil if the CFE settlement was fully funded. According to a recent report by the Alliance for Quality Education, by this calculation, New York City public schools are owed an additional 2.5 billion dollars, which means, A: Manhattan schools have been collectively shortchanged 376.7 million. Brooklyn Schools are owed an additional 724.8 million. Queens schools should have received an extra 704 million. Bronx schools are due an additional 513.9 million, and Staten Island are owed an extra 154 million. Within the boroughs we have individual schools that are owed each literally

millions and millions of dollars. As you know, the state stopped working to meet its obligations under the CFE settlement following the 208 financial crisis. Now, both the state and the city economies are recovering and the state is still failing to step up to the plate. The state's failure to fund its obligations amounts to a disinvestment in our public schools that as parents and teachers can tell you takes a toll. IN New York City, we have 4,000 fewer teachers, a five percent decline since before the financial crisis. That is why the council's leadership and support is so critical for the following initiatives, each of which meets an urgent need to ensure that our city's students receive a high quality education. Reducing class sizes, especially in K through three, grades K to three, down to no more than 15 children, which can be paid by closing tax loopholes for nonresident absentee owners of luxury properties, improving facilities for student learning, for instance, renovating current space, adding new buildings and removing trailers, supporting teacher centers, ensuring high quality professional development, and continuing support for the Teacher's Choice Reimbursement Program, and

redesigning more schools into community hubs serving students and parents through the Community Learning Schools Initiative. We welcome the Council's continued support and advocacy for our students in school. So as we talk to reducing class sizing and adding more seats, what does that look like? Parents and educators know and research has confirmed that smaller class sizes offer children greater opportunities from the individualized attention they need, but sadly tens of thousands of New York City students still attend oversized classes or have classrooms in trailers. At a recent news conference, the UFT proposed that the city could pay for reducing class sizes for K to three down to 15 children by closing tax loopholes that allow some 90,000 nonresident absentee owners of luxury properties to avoid paying their fair share of taxes. We also believe that the city has a far greater need for new classroom seats than would be provided under the new capital plan. We estimate the need for additional seats to be between 45,000 and 70,000. The plan calls for adding just 32,000 seats. We need a comprehensive strategy to reverse this trend of oversized classes, and we seek the Council's support

for creative approaches to generating the needed revenues. We applaud the city's move to make long overdue technology enhancements in our schools and to accelerate the timeline for replacing PCB contaminated lighting fixtures. Ultimately, the Smart Schools Bond Act may be helpful in accomplishing all of these goals, but Governor Cuomo's Administration has yet to detail a plan on how money from that bond will be distributed or spent. So, let's talk about enhancing teacher's skills. Thanks to our collaborative work with Mayor de Blasio and Chancellor Farina and to a series of innovative programs established by our new contract, we are proudly moving our schools forward. That includes an expanded career ladder for teachers through the new positions of master and model teachers as well as dedicated time for professional development and parent engagement. These initiatives are enhanced through the work of our teacher centers, which offer intense in-classroom support, after school study groups, citywide networks, conferences, and workshops and operate within more than 125 schools around the five boroughs. The offerings through teacher centers are based on the latest

research and best practices in specific academic areas as literacy, early childhood education, math and instruction for English language learners. And as you know, we were here a few weeks ago to talk about that, and many things have changed since that, and we're really moving on that. We are proud of the advances our schools are making through the additional professional development and other work that our teacher centers are able to accomplish on a limited budget. But there is a real fear that this year Governor Cuomo will completely eliminate funding for this program. That is why we are asking for the Council, council support in the form of a 20 million dollar allocation to keep this vital program running. We also want to talk about increasing teacher's choice. Our members, as you all know, so appreciate and value the Council's Teacher's Choice Initiative, which reimburses educators for some of the on average close to 500 a year is what teacher's spend out of pocket for the classes. We respectfully ask that the Council continue its commitment to this important and enormously popular program for the Fiscal Year of 2015, 2016. We propose a 20 million dollar allocation. We also are working very diligently with

our community schools and our union strongly supports additional investment toward the development of community schools, which through partnerships offer programs such as mentoring and tutoring, food and wellness, vision and dental services, physical and mental and health, and more to students and their parents, and help the schools remove whatever obstacles stand between children and their academic success. As we look to strengthen the work of the UFT's own community learning schools, we hope the council could again provide support. This year, our hope is to secure one million dollars from the Council to develop a mental health program for teens that will align mental health services with our various community schools. Students and their families faced a myriad of challenges daily from homelessness to food insecurities to mental health and behavioral issues. We have proposed providing easy access to mental health supports by creating a collaboration and infrastructure of a network of mental health providers and key community partners that will service our students and their families at our community learning school sites. If a school need additional mental health support, they will be

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Well, thank you very much and thank you for your strong resistance to some of the Governor's changes because I also deeply believe that they're not right for our students in

1
2 New York City, nor for any student in New York State
3 actually, to be honest with you. And I think that
4 fortunately, according the Quinope [sic] Act Poll,
5 most people agree.

6 EVELYN DEJESUS: Correct.

7 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: With the issues that
8 we see or are in favor of. And so that is a relief
9 to see. I do have some questions about some of the
10 proposals that you made here in the presentation.

11 EVELYN DEJESUS: Okay.

12 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And just one comment
13 also regarding the CFE money. I saw a list provided
14 by I think it was AQE if I'm not mistaken, that many
15 of the schools in my district are owed. If you took
16 the total money that we were asking for from the
17 state, they would get about two million dollars a
18 school, which is incredible when you think about it.
19 I mean, what each school in my district could do with
20 two million dollars would be just incredible. So, I
21 think we really must continue to keep the focus on
22 that, and you're right to keep the focus on that from
23 your perspective as well. And then one other
24 observation. As a former UFT Chapter Leader and
25 somebody who is deeply involved in the union, who

1 still deeply believes in the cause of the union, I
2 know that often times when we would have contract
3 discussions at delegate assemblies, yes, pay was an
4 important issue for teachers as it should be, because
5 I do believe that you get what you pay for. But that
6 was not always on the minds of teachers. What
7 teachers were equally fighting for was a reduction in
8 class size because they knew firsthand how it is that
9 you can get the children an individualized, your
10 instruction, when you have fewer students in your
11 class. And so, you know, prior to this we had a
12 hearing with Lorraine Grillo, the President of the
13 School Construction Authority, and we spoke a lot
14 about class size and reducing class size because we
15 think that that's vitally important as well. Now, in
16 terms of your proposals, you said that the Governor
17 may eliminate funding for the Teacher Center Program.
18 Now, that's a program that I did take advantage of as
19 well, and I know how vitally important that is to
20 teachers who want to present their students with some
21 type of a lesson, or you can go there and get advice
22 and help and curriculum materials, everything really
23 that you need to be a successful teacher. How is the
24 Governor going to eliminate that? Is that just
25

1 taking--that's not included in his budget, or what--
2 what's the story with that? Jeremy, I need to swear
3 you in, so raise your right hand. Do you solemnly
4 swear or affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth
5 and nothing but the truth and to answer Council
6 Member questions honestly?
7

8 JEREMY HOFFMAN: I do.

9 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And state your name
10 please for the record.

11 JEREMY HOFFMAN: Hi, Jeremy Hoffman,
12 United Federation of Teachers. The money for the
13 teacher's center has been historically included in
14 the state budget was not included in this current
15 proposed state budget. So, we're kind of inactive,
16 or really the Legislature, Senate and Assembly in
17 active negotiations to try to restore that funding.
18 It's hard to exactly know where that's at. At this
19 particular moment over the next seven to 10 days
20 there'll be lots of discussions occurring. If the
21 money does get restored, then that's takes a little
22 bit of the pressure off on the funding end in terms
23 of maintaining the services of the Teacher's Center,
24 but if it does not get restored, we need to have it
25 funded. It's too critical in terms of a service in

1 schools. I mean, you know, from your own experience
2 the services it provides and everything that we're
3 trying to do in terms of the quality side, but it was
4 not included, has yet to be included in the budget.

5 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I don't get the
6 Governor, really, because you know, he wants to
7 eliminate the opportunity for teachers to seek
8 professional development and support at the same time
9 that he wants to change the evaluation system. I
10 mean, it's just so like, you know, anti-teacher, and
11 you know, get rid of every teacher. I just don't
12 understand where he's coming from on this issue.

13 EVELYN DEJESUS: And can I just add, you
14 know, we have the Renewal Schools now. We're hoping
15 to get--because they have the--the Department of ED
16 has a group that comes in, assesses the Renewal
17 Schools where they need help, but then they leave.
18 Once they assess they leave. They put a plan of
19 action, and I think--as a teacher, and as you know,
20 we need sustainability. These schools have been in
21 trouble for many years, so if we have a teacher
22 center in these schools that can sustain that
23 teachers can go and say, "I'm having--I need help on
24 this. I need you to mentor." Because many of our
25

1 schools don't have mentor. Now we have the career
2 ladder with the master teacher that helps. So,
3 within, we're building teachers within teachers to be
4 master at that craft, and we're building capacity
5 from within. But these Renewal Schools are going to
6 need sustainability like never before, and if he
7 takes away that budget, what's going to happen to
8 these schools moving forward?

10 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I want to urge you to
11 keep very close to us as we go through the
12 negotiations, both at the state level and let us know
13 what's going on there, and also here on the local
14 level so that we can figure out if God forbid that is
15 not put into the state budget what we can do on a
16 local level as well.

17 JEREMY HOFFMAN: Of course.

18 EVELYN DEJESUS: Thank you so much.

19 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Just one more. I
20 have--

21 EVELYN DEJESUS: [interposing] Okay.

22 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: a couple more
23 questions if you don't mind.

24 EVELYN DEJESUS: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: You mentioned the one million dollars for the CLS initiative for the behavior stuff, one million dollars. Would that be in all 94 schools, or how would that break down?

JEREMY HOFFMAN: Yeah. So, the CLS funding that we received helped develop the initial [sic] of the UFT [sic] units. First and foremost, we should thank the Council for its partnership on that and the Council's been generous in its support. The CLS funding that we are trying to secure would be specifically for the several dozen CLS schools that the UFT is directly partnering with. That's a subset of the 94 that I think the mayor has called for including or expanding in the city. About 24 give or take are directly in partnership with the UFT, and we provide various levels of support, technical assistance and building out of program design and we want to expand the mental health services component of that.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: It'd be like one of the schools that I visited up in Broadway and Hunt--

JEREMY HOFFMAN: [interposing] Yeah, CHA, Community Heights Academy.

EVELYN DEJESUS: District Six.

JEREMY HOFFMAN: Yeah. CHA Academy is one of our hallmark CLS programs.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, so a million for that. And then Teacher's Choice, what is the current amount? Is it about six million?

JEREMY HOFFMAN: I think it's just over six million, and that's down from a high of over 20 million dollars before the previous mayor kind of systematically began to eliminate and cut that program.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And what were teachers getting individual for that six million? Was it about--was it less than 100 dollars each teacher or 75 dollars?

JEREMY HOFFMAN: Yeah, much closer to 35 [sic]. The allocation formula is a little bit--it's not across the board. It's a set amount for teachers. Lab technicians get a different amount. So some classroom teachers there's different increments of that, but it averages out to about 35 a teacher, and that is well down from what it used to cover.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And if we were to go to 20 million, how much would each teacher get? I

think at one point at a high, teachers were getting about 235 dollars?

JEREMY HOFFMAN: Yeah, it'd be just over 200 dollars per teacher on average, but bear to mind the distribution formula is a little bit--varies from job title.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Alright. No questions? Very good. Alright, thank you--

JEREMY HOFFMAN: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Evelyn DeJesus, UFT Vice President, and Jeremy Hoffman. Okay, our next panel will be Liz Accles from the Community Food Advocates, Nafestia Caleb from Bushwick Youth Food Council, Roshley Roy from Bushwick Food Council as well, Felicite Dambras--sorry if I'm mispronouncing your name--Simone Springer, Bushwick Youth Food Policy, Aminata Abdugaramé [sp?], Bushwick Food Council, Jay Anaya Goshbins [sp?], Bushwick Food Youth Council, Alleyne Hughley, Citywide Council on High Schools, and Doctor Christina Fernandez who is a pediatrician. Okay.

AMINATA ABDUGARAME: Good afternoon, everyone. My name is--

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: [interposing] Just hold on. I have to swear you all in. So, if you would raise your right hand, and do you solemnly swear or affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth and to answer Council Member questions honestly? I do? Okay, very good. And if you'd like to begin, please do so.

AMINATA ABDUGARAME: Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Aminata, and I'm currently 16 years old in the Bushwick Campus High School. This is also my second year with the Youth Food Policy Council. I am testifying today to expand universal free school lunch to all schools. I thank the City Council and Mayor de Blasio and the Chancellor for your support both this year as well as last. Imagine someone who has been trying to stay on scene for the longest time in a hide-n-seek [sic] game. They try their best to not show any evidence at all of their hiding place. Why are they hiding? Because they don't want to be seen by other members of the game. Why not? Because if that does happen, they lose. In the case of school lunch, many students play this game of hiding and being unseen. Why do students not want to be seen on the lunch line? Because of the

1 fear of getting caught. Why? Many reasons to answer
2 that. Let's go through the main points. Firstly, it
3 is the social class system that is being reinforced
4 by the school lunch process. Secondly, stigma or
5 bullying. All over the world, the model is to treat
6 people the way you want to be treated. Well, the
7 model does not exist in school's lunch, in school's
8 cafeteria. Name calling, put downs, bullying,
9 stigma, etcetera. Students get labeled. Can you
10 believe that school lunch actually does this to kids?
11 People are ashamed to get up and get lunch. What
12 about if they're hungry? What if that lunch is the
13 one and only meal for their whole entire day? What
14 about if their parents don't have money to give them
15 to go buy lunch? Then what? The answer is obvious.
16 They are hungry for that whole day until hopefully
17 they get home and eat something. The reason why
18 students don't get in line is because they are afraid
19 to get caught eating what our world knows now as
20 "free-free." Getting labeled or being bullied for
21 being a free-free is like getting labeled as an
22 outcast. Being an outcast in school for our
23 universal free school lunch means that everybody
24 knows who you are in a very, very bad way. This, it
25

has the same stigma as the person who is homeless and who is also on public assistance. You can believe whatever I'm saying to be credible because I was a witness. I know that this is not what the DOE was aiming for, but this is what actually happens in student's cafeterias. We ask you to please expand universal free school lunch to all schools in New York City so this will be a great success and achievement for all. Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. Next, please.

SIMONE SPRINGER: Hello, my name is Simone Springer. I am 16 years old. I'm a junior at The Brooklyn School for Math and Research in Bushwick High School campus. I joined the Youth Food Policy Council last year, and I've been an active member this year. We saw that lunch was a problem in our school and we wanted to solve it. We thought why just our school? What about the others? We joined the Lunch for Learning Campaign to get free school lunch for all schools in New York City. Throughout our journey we have met many Council Members and students to talk about the issues in our school lunch system. Today, I'm proud to say that--sorry. Yeah,

1 today, I'm proud to say that universal free school
2 lunch is in most New York City middle schools, but
3 that's not enough. I witness students being bullied
4 for eating the free-free. That could be disgusting,
5 and they--when they go to get free school lunch.
6 Universal should be available for all. Students who
7 pay for lunch are labeled as rich and the students
8 who don't are bullied for being poor. We don't--we
9 should not have this equality in our lunch room. No
10 one should be bullied for the food they eat.
11 Remember, students who don't eat don't learn. If
12 they don't learn, they could fail school. I would
13 like to thank the City Council, Mayor de Blasio and
14 the Chancellor for your support this year and last
15 year, and ask you to please expand universal free
16 lunch in all schools. Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much.
19 Next please.

20 FELICITE DAMBRAS: Hello. My name is
21 Felicite and I am 16 years old. I attend Bushwick
22 School for Social Justice and I am a member of the
23 Youth Food Policy Council. Being in school is not
24 easy, especially as a teenager. Our parents and
25 society tell us school is important and it is the

1 first key to success in life. One obstacle to
2 success that students face is staying focused during
3 class because of hunger. Food is the first priority
4 in our minds when we wake up in the morning and
5 through the afternoon. Students can't concentrate on
6 what they are doing without having food in their
7 body. I had an experience where I had to pay for
8 school lunch and it was a burden. In my school, some
9 students pay while others don't. I do not believe
10 that this is fair. All students should be able to
11 have access to free lunch so they can concentrate in
12 class. If the Department of Education wants students
13 to be treated equally at school, then everyone should
14 be able to have access to free and healthy school
15 lunch regardless of their parents or guardian income.
16 Today, I am asking that universal free school lunch
17 be expanded to all New York City schools. Thank you
18 for your time.

19
20 JANNAY YASKINS: I am Jannay Yaskins. I
21 am a 15 year old. I go to Academy for Environmental
22 Leadership, and I am a part of the Youth Food Policy
23 Council. I believe in universal free school lunch,
24 because in order to focus throughout the school day,
25 you need to eat so that you do not focus on being

1 hungry. This also brings situations related to
2 health. Health is very important because with good
3 health you do not have to worry about a barrier
4 preventing you to do things. Without eating in the
5 school day, you cannot concentrate in classes, which
6 can cause failing grades. Classroom academics should
7 not be caused by lack of nutrition and hunger. Thank
8 you to the City Council, Mayor de Blasio and the
9 Chancellor for your support in taking the first step
10 last year. We should now expand free school lunch to
11 all levels of school.

13 ROSHLEY ROY: My name's Roshley Roy, and
14 I attend the Brooklyn School for Math and Research at
15 the Bushwick campus. I'm 16 years old and currently
16 in the 11th grade. And I'm part of the Youth Food
17 Policy Council at my school. First, I would like to
18 thank the City Council, Mayor de Blasio and the
19 Chancellor for providing universal free school lunch
20 this year in middle schools. Universal free school
21 lunch is what everyone is talking about these days.
22 Thankfully, free school lunch was officially
23 instituted in some middle schools, and this year, I
24 need the same to be instituted in my high school and
25 all high schools citywide next year. Cost of school

1 lunch is something that causes a burden on many
2 parents. Not all parents who send their kids to
3 public schools can afford to pay bills without
4 worrying about a limit. My parents fit into this
5 category, and ever since I started high school, my
6 parents were constantly stressing about how to
7 balance all of the bills and also pay for both me and
8 my brother's school lunch. Once free school lunch
9 was established in middle schools that was one less
10 school lunch fee for my parents to worry about. I
11 know I'm not the only one who has struggling parents.
12 Universal free school lunch shouldn't only be limited
13 to middle school. It should reach out to all schools
14 alike. Thank you.

16 NAFESTIA CALEB: Hello, my name is
17 Nafestia Caleb. I'm 17 years old and I attend at
18 Brooklyn School for Math and Research at Bushwick
19 campus. I am here to speak to you about the Lunch
20 Learning Campaign. As some of you may know, the
21 Lunch Learning Campaign was created to have universal
22 free school lunch in all public schools. I'd like to
23 thank the City Council, Mayor de Blasio and the
24 Chancellor for making school lunches free in some
25 middle schools this year. Although this is a great

1 start, it is not enough. Today, you heard about the
2 bullying and the stigma student's face in the lunch
3 room, the impact on our parent's finances, and the
4 health implications of hunger. However, I'd like to
5 make another point. What happens when a student has
6 free school lunch in middle school and then begins
7 high school and no longer has it? The transition
8 into high school is challenging enough, so why create
9 another barrier. We are asking that you expand
10 universal free school lunch in all New York City
11 public schools so that this doesn't have to happen.
12 In general, if a student has access to free school
13 lunch, that can--oh. If a student doesn't have
14 access to free school lunch, that can affect them as
15 well. Students can't focus when they are hungry.
16 Education is the key to success, so why take away
17 something to have a good education?

18
19 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Are any of the adults
20 going to te--speak?

21 CHRISTINA FERNANDEZ: My name is Doctor
22 Christina Fernandez, and I'm a General Pediatrician
23 who practices in Washington Heights. I'd like to
24 start by thanking the Council, Mayor de Blasio and
25 Chancellor Farina for the universal free lunch in the

1 New York City middle schools this past year. As a
2 pediatrician, the health and well-being of children
3 and adolescents is my number one priority, and I'm
4 here to request full expansion of universal free
5 lunch to all students. Nutrition is of utmost
6 importance when considering the health of children
7 and their future. My anticipatory guidance to
8 patients typically entails encouraging families to
9 eat more fruits and vegetables, limit intake of
10 sugary beverages and snacks, and promote regular
11 exercise. What I had failed to recognize was that my
12 counseling was only considering part of the problem.
13 My pediatrician colleagues and I have noticed several
14 instances of health side effects in our patients who
15 regularly skip school lunch to avoid being bullied or
16 called out for eating the free-free in the cafeteria.
17 My friend, Doctor Janet Lee, a pediatrician with a
18 focus on adolescent health who practices in East
19 Harlem recounted a story to me as follows. "It was
20 during my time working a school-based health clinic
21 that I met Nick. Nick, a slightly lanky 10th grader
22 with glasses a little too large for his face, came
23 down to the clinic every day during fifth period.
24 Without fail, he would complain that his eyeballs
25

1 felt like they were going to pop out of his head.

2 Every day, I would ask him the same questions,

3 questions ranging from "Were you vomiting with a

4 headache?" to, "Are you coming down here because you

5 left your math homework at home?" Fifteen doses of

6 Ibuprofen later, I finally figured out that the

7 question I had been neglecting to ask was, "Did you

8 eat lunch?" It turned out that Nick had been

9 skipping lunch every day because he wanted to avoid

10 being bullied in the lunchroom for being the poor

11 kid." I had a similar experience last month with an

12 11th grader named Janet who came into my clinic

13 complaining of feeling dizzy and like her heart was

14 beating really fast. I asked all the standard

15 questions about family history of heart disease,

16 blurry vision, blacking out, and whether she felt

17 like she wanted to throw up. When I got to the

18 questions about whether she was eating and drinking

19 water in school, she looked down and shrugged her

20 shoulders. She told me she felt embarrassed to each

21 school lunch because several of her friends did not

22 receive free lunch and would always crack jokes about

23 the students who did. Our experiences working with

24 teenagers has helped us to understand the

25

developmental scientific basis for the skipped lunch phenomenon. As the current system of lunch in school stands, children and teens are labeled as the poor kids when obtaining free lunch. During the early years of adolescence, 11 to 13 years especially, relationship development has a powerful impact on the social constricts of the lunchroom. It is during these years that young people develop a much stronger interest in peer relationships. This heightened interest is such a strong social determinant that teens have a developmentally appropriate increased focused on peer acceptance, even stronger than the physiological needs of things like food. This developmental trajectory can contribute to the increased prevalence of bullying in this age group. Children that are labeled as different are very quickly isolated and marginalized. High school students have reported that the highest rates of bullying, especially of lower income children who are eligible for free lunch in their schools occurs in the lunch room. When harkening back to my understanding of brain physiology with high fuel demands of the brain to function optimally and thinking about the rapid physical changes with growth

into the budget and let it reflect this much needed free lunch for all students universally. I handed a resolution that we have passed on our council to reflect the free lunch program. It says, "Federal law allows New York City to make healthy school lunches universally free for every public school student and New York City is not taking advantage of the great opportunity in making healthy school lunches universally free for every public school student, and the need for universal free lunch students is clear. One in every four New York City children live in a home that lacks enough food and the consequences of childhood hunger are dire. Hunger negatively impacts children's learning and health, and school meals are a critical tool in the fight against hunger, but because of the way the program is currently administered, only about 50 percent of New York City children are eligible for free lunch or reduced lunch to eat. In 2013, 250,000 out of 780,000 students eligible for free or reduced priced meals do not participate in subsidized school lunch programs. Many are students--many more students are above income eligibility for free or reduced price lunch, yet are in families that are

struggling to make ends meet. Additionally, currently, 81 percent of elementary school students eat school lunch. it drops to 61 percent in middle school and 38 percent in high school due to high stigmatization of these students who receive free lunch are poverty stricken and the fear of being labeled by their peer with long lasting health and educational consequences. Hundreds of thousands of students in New York City public schools do not participate in federally funded school lunch due to programs, poverty, stigma. If students participated, more nutritious choices could be offered, and the stigma would be eliminated. An astonishing 68 percent of New York City schools, 1.1 million public school children have family incomes low enough to be eligible for free school lunch. Some income children are not enrolled in the free or reduced price lunch program because their parents do not submit the paperwork. Many of these parents are concerned about sharing personal financial information. Immigrant parents fear the reprisal from the government or do not know about the program. Making lunch universally free to all students eliminates all these barriers and ensures all New York City public school children

1 have access to a healthy lunch. By expanding the
2 program, advocates seek to eliminate the shame and
3 embarrassment that keep many children who qualify for
4 free lunches from receiving them. The New York City
5 Council on High Schools believes that New York City
6 should take advantage of the federal options
7 available to provide free meals and that the city
8 should make the small investment needed so that no
9 student has to pay for a meal, and that the New York
10 City Council on High Schools wants to ensure that
11 more children eat healthy school meals by making them
12 free for all regardless of income. The New York City
13 Council on High Schools calls upon the Mayor and the
14 Governor and also the City Council to make school
15 lunches free for all students irrespective of the
16 income levels of their parents. Thank you.

18 LIZ ACCLES: Good afternoon. I'm Liz
19 Accles with Community Food Advocates. Thank you for
20 the opportunity to speak and for listening to our
21 whole crew here. So, I'm just-- I'm not going to
22 read through my testimony. I'm going to just say
23 thank you for all of your support and for making sure
24 that we had this important first step last year.
25 What's different last year from this year is that we

1 actually have evidence, direct evidence, of the
2 success of universal on the participation of middle
3 school students in school lunch. So I'm just going
4 to point out three very quick things, and there are
5 charts in here on page three. But looking at the
6 first--my colleague Agnes Mulnar [sp?], I'm not sure
7 if she's still here, does all our number crunching,
8 and using school food data found comparing last year
9 to this year from September to December 2014 to 2013
10 that middle school lunch participation was up by over
11 eight percent. And at the same time, participation
12 in elementary schools or high schools was flat or
13 decreased. So it's a very direct line, a very
14 significant increase. Actually, more than we would
15 have anticipated very early in the program than we
16 thought. So, the other piece to look at is that the
17 other analysis she did was comparing middle school
18 students this year depending on the type of lunch
19 program they had. So, students in schools without
20 middle school students without universal had about a
21 52 percent participation rate. For students who are
22 in universal middle schools with universal starting
23 in September, it was about 67 percent. So there's a
24 15 percent jump up. And for the students in schools
25

1 that have had universal under an older, smaller
2 number of students, but under an older federal
3 option, the participation rate was 75 percent. So
4 the more students are--it's available, the longer
5 it's there, the less income becomes an issue. You
6 see a 20 percent jump, over 20 percent jump in
7 participation. In addition for the purposes of this
8 hearing, there's a significant increase under--I'm
9 not going to get into the technicalities of the
10 community eligibility program here, but there's
11 increased federal revenue just from the increased
12 participation and the way that the reimbursements are
13 categorized by the federal government. New York City
14 has brought in an additional 4.1 million dollars in
15 the first four months of universal being implemented
16 in middle schools than the prior year. So, you know
17 what we're calling for. I don't need to say it. Thank
18 you for all of your support and I'm happy to answer
19 questions if you have any.

21 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Well, thank you very
22 much, Liz, and you know that this has been a priority
23 for this council and for this Speaker as well. We
24 continue to make it a priority and we want to see
25 more students served in the program. And while we are

1
2 impressed with the results of the funding and what we
3 did last year, we still see that there's need for
4 more work to be done, and we would like to in some
5 way expand that. I did, in the expense portion of
6 the budget, ask the Chancellor for some information
7 about what is the delay, not exactly those words, but
8 hinted at the issue that they bring up often times,
9 which is the cost. And she said that there are some
10 hidden costs to it. Now, I did meet with some
11 members of the union of Local 372 who are the
12 cafeteria workers as well, and I think that they do
13 have some legitimate concerns about the work load
14 that they have right now as it stands, and that the
15 additional work that would be needed to be done to
16 implement this may be a concern to them as well. Do
17 you have an idea, because this is one of the things I
18 was trying to extract from the Chancellor, but did
19 not get a full answer, but they did say that they
20 were looking to work with us on this issue. Any idea
21 of what the cost for additional workers would be?

22 LIZ ACCLES: We don't have it broken out.
23 How--I mean, just to say, DC 37 and Local 372 are
24 also part of the Lunch for Learning Campaign.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Yes, and they support it and they would like to see us implement this. It's not that.

LIZ ACCLES: Right.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: It's just that we have to try to, I think, get to the bottom of what the Chancellor's saying is that there's a cost attached to it and then come to terms with how we can find that funding to do it.

LIZ ACCLES: Yes, and our understanding, because the program is, you know, most of it is federally funded. The city makes up a gap, and our anticipation over time if it was universal that it would cost citywide there would be a 20 percent increase in participation, and that would cost the city--this what we've been saying since last year. This is including the 6.5 million in the middle schools--maximum, 20 million dollars a year. But we actually think it's significantly less because there--by not doing community eligibility there's a tremendous amount of federal reimbursement that should be coming into the city that would help cover those costs. So it's really--there is a federal incentive program. The federal government wants us

1 to do this, and the way it's incentivized both in
2 terms of elimination of forms but also in the way the
3 reimbursement structure works. So there would--so,
4 just to say within four months of universal just in a
5 very small slice of the number of students in the
6 city, there's four million dollars that the city
7 brought in that they wouldn't have brought in
8 otherwise. So, there's a lot more revenue to draw
9 down as well that would cover a lot of cost, because
10 it's a per meal reimbursement cost. So, it's not
11 that it wouldn't cost the city any additional money,
12 but our cost have anticipated that way.

14 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: The four million that
15 you're talking about having come in, is that money
16 that could be used toward staff, or does that have to
17 be used specifically for food, or how does that work?

18 LIZ ACCLES: No, no, it's the
19 reimbursement that covers all of it. So, let me be
20 clear, 3.6 million of that money was for lunch. It
21 went towards--the increased participation and then
22 the way the reimbursement works under community
23 eligibility provision, and then 500,000 of that,
24 because the meals are reimbursed at a higher rate
25 under community eligibility including breakfast. I

mean, even though it brought in an additional 500,000 dollars. So there is this huge amount of money that's available to be drawn down through this program. That's not--and it goes for food, labor, everything having to do with the program.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I don't know if you've had a chance to look at the budget. I don't know how it's delineated in the lines, but have you seen an increase there in the budget reporting that we've seen from the DOE?

LIZ ACCLES: We haven't, no. This is Agnes, she does all the numbers. I can't read that. The--right, the labor costs are covered by the reimbursements. So, any additional--yeah, I mean that's the way it's structured, is that additional labor costs, you know, it's entitlement based. So the more students, the more meals, the more money. It's not a block grant. So that's the basic structure.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Have you been meeting with the Chancellor on this issue?

LIZ ACCLES: We've been talking to the Chancellor and her folks on this issue, yes.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: It's ongoing?

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

LIZ ACCLES: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And they're working
with you?

LIZ ACCLES: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. IN good faith.
Alright.

LIZ ACCLES: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: If they're not, I want
you to let me know.

LIZ ACCLES: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: This is a priority--

LIZ ACCLES: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: for this council and
we want to move in that direction and we want to get
beyond what they claim is the issue for not
implementing the program.

LIZ ACCLES: Yes. Yes, okay, we will.
Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Alright, good. So,
alright, so I want to also thank these young women
who came in to give testimony and the doctor as well,
and our parent, I guess, also. I was very impressed
by your testimony as we always are whenever we hear
from the voices of students because that really is

1 why we're here is to hear from our students. And you
2 presented yourselves in a very, very good way. I was
3 a teacher, you know, for 25 years before I got
4 elected to the City Council and I love to say that,
5 and I wish I had students as bright and good as you.
6 I had good students and everything, but you really
7 presented very well. I have to say, this is the way
8 you create change, coming in, having a discussion,
9 presenting this information to your elected officials
10 and giving us an opportunity to try to work it out.
11 So, I want to thank you all for coming and you're an
12 outstanding group of young women. And it's Women's
13 History Month, and you're here. Thank you. Thank
14 you very much. I'm going to call our next panel.
15 You're here making history. Next panel will be
16 Maggie Moroff from Arise Coalition, Randi Levine from
17 Advocates for Children, Jane Heaphy from Learning
18 Leaders, Maria Bautista from Alliance for Quality
19 Education, Felicia Alexander from Coalition for
20 Educational Justice, and Natasha Capers from the
21 Coalition for Educational Justice. Okay, I'm going
22 to ask you all if you'd raise your right hand because
23 I do swear everybody in at these hearings. And do
24 you solemnly swear or affirm to tell the truth, the
25

whole truth and nothing but the truth and to answer Council Member questions honestly? Okay, very good. Who would like to begin? Have you done the coin toss yet? Okay, we'll start on the left over there.

MAGGIE MOROFF: Okay. Good afternoon. Thank you. Thank you for the chance to speak today. It's been a really interesting day so far. I'm Maggie Moroff. I'm the Special Education Policy Coordinator at Advocates for Children. I'm also the Coordinator of the Arise Coalition, and I'm here today on behalf of the Arise Coalition. Arise is a group of parents, advocates, educators, academics that came together a bunch of years ago around special ed reform issues and we work to improve day to experiences and long term outcomes for students with disabilities. Among the concerns that we've raised with the Department of Education over the past years, Arise has been advocating with the DOE to significantly increase literacy rates for students with disabilities. The current DOE does seem to share this goal, but to make that a reality, they're going to need sufficient resources to do that work. So for that reason, we were really very happy to see the line in the Mayor's proposed budget allocating

3.2 million dollars to support literacy development for students with disabilities, including students with dyslexia. This funding would be spent over five years and it represents a great start, but it's really only a start. I'm here today to urge the Council to fund this initiative as a down payment on what we hope will be a much longer term commitment to ensuring that every student in New York City learns to read proficiently. Students with IEP's represent a substantial and growing population in our city's schools. There are currently about 19 percent of the entire student population. In 2014 less than seven percent of those students between grades three and eight who participated in special--in standardized testing scored threes and fours on their ELA exams. In 2013, only 31 percent of the high school students with disabilities who took the ELA Regents Exam passed, but without a passing score, a student can't graduate from high school with a Regents or a local diploma. Not surprisingly, unemployment rates for adults with disabilities are twice what they are for their peers without disabilities. More can and must be done to support students with special education needs in developing literacy skills. There are

plenty of studies that show that when students with disabilities receive age appropriate, intensive, systematic, and evidence-based interventions, their literacy skills do progress. All student's skills improve when they're taught in literacy rich environments that include explicit instruction in phonemic awareness, in phonics, in fluency and vocabulary and comprehension strategies, and when they then receive targeted small group instruction when assessment demonstrates the need. Last fall, the members of the Arise Coalition identified a number of specific reforms that we believe are necessary to improve literacy rates for students with disabilities. We shared those with the DOE on a number of occasions, and in fact, we shared them with you last October as well, very quickly. Those were the students need to receive evidence-based core literacy instruction, that from kindergarten through high school, student need to receive ongoing screening for reading ability and then get additional evidence-based intervention when that's not enough, that by using augmentative communication devices, assistive technology, age appropriate materials, digitalized text and other multimedia, that schools

can support literacy development and content instruction for all students regardless of their ability to use spoken language or to access curriculum through paper and pencil alone, or even to access the same content as their more typically developing peers. And the last of those recommendations is that schools absolutely need to partner with parents in literacy instruction providing strategies for parents to use at home, engaging in ongoing dialogue about individual children and providing information on how to access needed screening and interventions. So, as I said before, the changes we recommend are really critical, but they require an investment from the city. The 3.2 million proposed is a great start, but when spread out over five years, and then more than 186,000 students with IEP's, it comes out to only about three dollars per student per year. So it's really not enough to make much of a dent. We encourage the city to start with this money, to take it as a down payment to do the work that they need to do and to continue to fund school students in order to improve literacy rates for students with

disabilities in order to see meaningful changes.

Thank you very much, and I'm happy to answer--

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: [interposing] Sure, before we go to the next panelist, I just want to ask you, I was unaware of the 3.2 million. This is new?

MAGGIE MOROFF: No, this was a item in the proposed budget. It's explicitly identified for two pedagogical seats, for school--not for school staff, but for DOE-wide staff to support students with disabilities and it specifically says students with dyslexia. Although in conversations we've had with the DOE since that came out, they say it's to support all students with disabilities.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So, this has been in the budget before?

MAGGIE MOROFF: No.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Oh, so that's what I was asking.

MAGGIE MOROFF: Yeah, no, no--

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: [interposing] This is--

MAGGIE MOROFF: this is brand new in the proposals, I'm sorry.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Do you know where in the budget it is? Is it in the DOE budget?

MAGGIE MOROFF: It is.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay.

MAGGIE MOROFF: And in the DOE, it will sit with the division of specialized instruction.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. Go ahead.

MAGGIE MOROFF: And that the amount for this year alone is 655,000. So that 3.2 is spread out over those five years.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Good. We need to just know that. In your testimony you mentioned communication devices.

MAGGIE MOROFF: Yeah.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Were you here for the whole hearing?

MAGGIE MOROFF: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: When I asked about the tablets?

MAGGIE MOROFF: Well, actually I was here for most of the hearing.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Yeah. Is that what you're referring to there?

1
2 MAGGIE MOROFF: So, we're talking about
3 the use of assistive technology for individual
4 students with disabilities and then instructional
5 technology for classrooms as a whole, and really the
6 combination of the two will allow a lot of students
7 who don't already access the content for a number of
8 personal reasons to be able to process, access,
9 understand, communicate, all of those things.

10 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And finally, I just
11 want to ask you, does the Arise and the number of
12 students being served in special education cause any
13 alarm or is that a good thing?

14 MAGGIE MOROFF: I think it's--I also
15 think that it, yes, it is of interest, but I think
16 that it is probably a more accurate reading of the
17 numbers of students with disabilities. I think that
18 some of the stigma has been removed and so as the
19 Chancellor said earlier, more families are seeking
20 those supports, but at the same time, I think that
21 they're seeking those supports because they're not
22 getting the support at the school level already. So,
23 a lot of, you know, for example, with the technology
24 that we were just talking about, a lot of the need
25 that you see coming up for students might not be

present if students only were able to access the curriculum that they're missing, and if teachers were better prepared.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, thank you. I just wanted to take advantage of the opportunity to ask some special Ed questions. Thank you.

MAGGIE MOROFF: Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Next, please.

RANDI LEVINE: Good afternoon. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today. My name is Randi Levine, and I'm Policy Coordinator at Advocates for Children of New York. Advocates for Children speaks out for students whose need are often forgotten, such as students with disabilities, immigrant students and students with behavioral challenges. We are heartened to see that the preliminary budget includes increased funding to support these groups of students and their families. While far more funding is needed to have a significant impact on student achievement, the preliminary budget takes several positive steps. I'm not going to read my entire written testimony, but will highlight a few of these programs. First, each year, Advocates for Children hears from thousands of

families of students with disabilities, many of whom are requesting help because their children are struggling to learn to read. While teaching students to read is a fundamental responsibility of schools, the most recent state tests revealed that 93 percent of the students with disabilities in New York City who took those tests are not proficient in reading. So we agree with the Arise Coalition testimony. We think that the literacy initiative in the preliminary budget is a good step and as a down payment on a longer term commitment to ensuring that all students with disabilities learn to read. Second, each year, we work with hundreds of families whose primary language is not English, and we're pleased that the preliminary budget includes increased funding for over the phone interpretation services through language line. While the budget includes onetime funding for a public awareness campaign regarding the availability of interpretation services, we think that the DOE must do more to ensure that school staff who interact with families are aware of these services. We also urge the Administration and City Council to increase funding for written translation of important documents such as IEP's to help parents

1 understand their children's educational needs and the
2 services the school is recommending. Third, every
3 year we work with several hundred families whose
4 children are experience behavioral challenges in
5 school or are facing suspension. We support the
6 funding in the preliminary budget for therapeutic
7 crisis intervention training as well as guidance
8 counselors at the Alternative Learning Centers where
9 students go when they're suspended. Hereto, however,
10 the city should have a far more significant, can have
11 a far more significant impact with an additional
12 investment in funding for initiatives such as
13 restorative practices and increased social workers
14 and guidance counselors in targeted schools and at
15 juvenile detention sites. And finally, we're pleased
16 that the preliminary budget includes an ongoing
17 commitment to full day pre-k. We look forward to
18 completing the job of making sure that every four
19 year old in New York City has a pre-k seat. At the
20 same time, we're hearing from families and from pre-k
21 staff that pre-k students are not receiving their
22 mandated IEP services at pre-k programs, and we want
23 to make sure that there's adequate staffing for the
24 Committee on Preschool Special Education Offices. As
25

1
2 the number of children in pre-k increases, we're
3 going to see a rise in the number of children
4 identified earlier and need to make sure that the
5 staffing is there to provide these children with
6 their services early in life when they can have the
7 biggest impact. Thanks for the opportunity to speak
8 with you and I'm happy to answer any questions.

9 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So, quickly, also as
10 the increase of about 30,000 special ed preschool
11 students, is that of any concern to you, or is that a
12 good thing?

13 RANDI LEVINE: It's always hard as we're
14 analyzing data. It's a nuanced picture when we see
15 an increase in the number of students identified
16 earlier for students who needs those services that's
17 positive. The research shows that the earlier we can
18 identify delays and address those delays, the better
19 off these children will be and the greater likelihood
20 that these children will be declassified at some
21 point and be able to enter general education
22 classrooms. At the same time, we know that there's
23 both an over-classification problem and an under
24 classification problem in New York City. I think
25 generally, with the expansion of pre-k, we would

1
2 expect to see more young children being identified
3 and getting services and that that's positive. At
4 the same time, we still have 17 year olds walking
5 into our office who have never learned to read and
6 who have never been identified as needing special
7 education services. When we get evaluations for
8 them, we see that in fact they have dyslexia or some
9 kind of learning disability, and had it been
10 identified much earlier, we could have helped make a
11 tremendous difference in their lives.

12 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Absolutely. Council
13 Member Chin has a question also.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Yes. Earlier when
15 we asked the Chancellor about translation services
16 and she was mentioning now that they have this system
17 set up where every Tuesday they meet with parents to
18 talk about the IEP and translations are available.
19 So, do you find that working? Is it true that
20 parents are getting that service and have
21 translations available to them to explain their kid's
22 IEP?

23 RANDI LEVINE: First, let me say how much
24 we appreciated your asking those questions of the
25 Chancellor. The Tuesday time is the time carved out

1 in the new union contract for schools to be
2 interacting with families. We were glad that at the
3 start of this school year, Chancellor Farina
4 encouraged schools to use that time to especially
5 reach out to parents whose children have IEP's. So,
6 that is a positive development. In terms of
7 interpretation and translation, we continue to see
8 tremendous problems in that area, both in terms of
9 the quality of interpretation at IEP meetings or
10 interpretation not being offered as an option, and we
11 honestly rarely see an IEP that has been translated
12 into the family's native language. So that continues
13 to be a big concern for us.

14
15 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Do you have like an
16 estimated amount of funding should be added to make
17 sure there is enough written translation?

18 RANDI LEVINE: I don't have that right
19 now. We can certainly work with your office and
20 discuss that further.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Okay, that would be
22 great. Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, thank you. And
24 next, Jane?

JANE HEAPHY: Good afternoon. Thank you, Chairman Dromm. [off mic] Thank you fellow panelists. Good afternoon. Thank you, Chairman Dromm and Council Member Chin and the rest of the Council for the opportunity to testify today on the importance of support for family engagement in our public schools. My name is Jane Heaphy, and I'm Executive Director of Learning Learders, which is dedicated to public school student success through family and community engagements. Bringing needed resources to schools, we train over 4,000 parent volunteers to provide one to one support in classrooms, assist in libraries, facilitate book groups among other roles. We also deliver hands on workshops to an additional 4,000 families to level the playing field on navigating the school system, and share simple but effective strategies parents can use to support young people's educational development. The families we work with reflect the diversity of our city. Twenty-five percent are immigrants to the US, 50 percent speak another language at home other than English, and over 70 percent identify as people of color. The 200 plus schools that we partner with are over 90 percent

1 Title One and are spread across the city. So why are
2 we dedicated to this larger mission of family
3 engagement is because we know from research and what
4 Chairman Dromm and the Speaker and the Chancellor and
5 the Mayor and many other Council Members have stated,
6 that parents as engaged partners are a major
7 component of student success, but it does not happen
8 automatically. It doesn't happen just because
9 parents care about their children's education or all
10 parents would be deeply engaged in our schools, as
11 they do care about their children's success. And it
12 does not just happen because school leaders are told
13 they should address barriers and include families
14 more meaningfully. True partnership with families
15 requires capacity building on both sides, resources
16 for communication and outreach and structured
17 opportunities for collaboration. We see multiple
18 impacts of our work. Parents who complete training
19 as volunteers and give their time to their child's
20 school make an impact on the whole school.
21 Principals cite improved school climate and increased
22 academic success of students as two top benefits of
23 such programs. Volunteers are proud of their
24 contributions, but they also describe important
25

1 outcomes for their families. They say what they
2 learn as volunteers they bring home to their own
3 children, and they cite the confidence they gain as
4 volunteers as parents engaged integrally into the
5 school as why they run for SLT and PTA's and CEC's
6 and the reason they pursue their own continued
7 education or gain new employment. Our workshop
8 evaluation shows parents overwhelmingly want and
9 value new information in ways to strategize around
10 their children's learning. So, I applaud Chancellor
11 Farina's focus on family engagement, making it one of
12 her four pillars, and I believe this is true, that
13 families keep the house upright. And I'm grateful
14 for the Council's belief that parents need to be part
15 of the solution. With this much alignment on the
16 importance of families, we have tremendous
17 opportunity to make good on this message, but it does
18 take deliberate action and resources. Real school
19 family partnership requires funding to do outreach
20 training screening and support of volunteers to build
21 the capacity of schools to effectively partner with
22 parents, for schools to provide better communication
23 and more opportunities for involvement, to meet
24 parents where they literally and figuratively live
25

1 with the information they want and need to help their
2 kids succeed. It takes funding to do all this work
3 and to do it in multiple languages meeting local
4 needs. In closing, I express my gratitude that
5 families are essential vision of this Council and of
6 the Department of Education, and I ask you to support
7 the programs and strategies that make family
8 engagement come to life. I urge you to make family
9 school partnership a priority in the city's budget,
10 and I thank you.
11

12 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Jane, what happened
13 with your funding last year?

14 JANE HEAPHY: With the Department and with
15 the Council?

16 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: In the both.

17 JANE HEAPHY: With the department, over
18 the last part of the last Administration, the funding
19 that schools could use to train volunteers was
20 eliminated, and so there was no funding at all. We
21 are in conversations with the Chancellor. She
22 believes obviously in a broad range of strategies for
23 family engagement. We also had previously Council
24 Member--council support to provide workshops for
25 families around middle school applications, because

1 we know how inequitable that process is, and that
2 funding was not granted last year, so we're looking
3 for restoration of that specifically for us. But I'm
4 also here today largely, you know, to make sure that
5 family engagement is thought of as a very clear
6 budget item. So, for the work that we do and for
7 other programs around the city to really think about
8 not another mandate on schools, but really making
9 sure that the resources are there so that families
10 are meaningfully involved in ours in particular as
11 well.
12

13 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: What was your Council
14 allocation in I guess it would be Fiscal 14?

15 JANE HEAPHY: Eighty thousand, and then--
16 well, in--yes, in 14. So, and we've asked for
17 restoration actually of a little more than that for
18 to continue the work with middle school families.

19 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And that was
20 completely cut out last year?

21 JANE HEAPHY: Yes.

22 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Do you know where that
23 came from originally, what pot?

24 JANE HEAPHY: Origin--very originally?

25 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Well, where was--

JANE HEAPHY: [interposing] Well, it was the Speaker, the Speaker.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, thank you.

JANE HEAPHY: Okay, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Maria?

MARIA BAUTISTA: Hi, good afternoon. My name is Maria Bautista. I'm the NYC Campaign Coordinator for the Alliance for Quality Education. Thanks for this space to be able to give testimony. The Alliance for Quality Education is a statewide coalition that focuses primarily on securing adequate funding for public schools, as well as being committed to advocating and ensuring that these funds are distributed equitably throughout the state. We commend the efforts of City Council Member Daniel Dromm, Inez Barron and other City Council Members who have been very vocal advocates at the state level calling for the state to comply with the CFE court-mandated distribution of funds. New York City is currently owed 2.5 billion dollars. Year after year, our schools have been depleted and starved and then called failures, and for these reasons we urge the City Council Education Committee to continue to advocate and fight for these monies owed. Equitable

1 distribution of funds both at the state and city
2 level is a central component to addressing the stark
3 disparities our schools are faced with. And so we
4 also urge the City Council to look at the disparities
5 within in our own New York City Department of
6 Education. Earlier today, students from the
7 International Community High School in the Bronx
8 protested the fact that their school as well as many
9 other schools across New York City do not have access
10 to sports. Do we think that 17,000 students of color
11 going to school without any sports teams is just?
12 Thirty-six thousand students of color go to schools
13 with almost no sports. Is this equity? But that
14 just scratches the surface of what inequity in New
15 York City Schools looks like. We work with and have
16 heard testimonies from parents and students who do
17 not have libraries or librarians, functional
18 technology, text books, science labs, AP courses, no
19 arts or music, and many of those schools are in
20 communities of color. There is no equity in post-
21 secondary planning in schools or guidance counselors.
22 There is no equity for English language learners and
23 special needs students. The Mayor's Renewal School
24 Initiative is a great opportunity to provide
25

comprehensive supports and resources to schools that are struggling and that address [sic] inequities propagated at the state level and exacerbated by the past Administration. We need to see increased funding for schools that work with families and students with higher needs. This is the way to go. While New York State's decision to not adequately fund our schools has tremendously impacted all New York City schools, we see that the effects in low income communities have been even more severe and drastic. We urge you to not only look into the disparities in resources, but to also take action to ensure that schools that have been stripped and bled of resources have equitable funding to begin to address the gaps and provide opportunities that all students need to be successful. In this budget, let's prioritize the schools and communities that have the highest needs. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you, Maria, and very proud to have worked very closely with you, and I know Natasha's going to speak on other topics as well that we've worked very closely on, but you know, on Monday we're going to have another Education Committee hearing, and that's going to focus on

testing and the parent's right to opt out of testing.

And I believe that what undermines a lot of our

discussions in education is this overemphasis and

misuse of standardized tests, and so much is based on

that and tests were never meant to be used that way,

etcetera, so forth and so on, but I'm very proud of

the work that this committee has done and that my

staff has done as well, because at the next Stated,

we're going to pass four resolutions on CFE funding

and making sure that we get our share fair of dollars

for that on testing, because I think that's really

vitally important for people to understand how those

tests have been misused, the charter cap and on

receivership. So, I want to thank you for your work

on that and Natasha as well.

MARIA BAUTISTA: I also want to thank you

all, because you've done such an amazing job. I

mean, you went up last week and met with our Black

Caucus at the state level, and that really has made

an impact. I think that every time we speak out and

every time that our Education Committee members speak

out about how this is impacting our education budget,

it really sends a loud message, and people are

1
2 listening. So, thank you so much for your advocacy
3 and your work around that issue.

4 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. Natasha?

5 NATASHA CAPERS: Good afternoon. I am
6 Natasha Capers, the Coordinator for New York City
7 Coalition for Educational Justice. I want to thank
8 you and the City Council for having us at this
9 hearing today. CEJ is a coalition of community based
10 organizations across the city working in low income
11 communities of color for educational equity. The
12 Coalition for Educational Justice believes that
13 parent engagement is an important component to make
14 schools successful. We also know that schools,
15 administrators and teachers need assistance and
16 guidance to make this possible. Mayor de Blasio is
17 quoted as saying, "Our experience as public school
18 parents has guided our vision for public schools,
19 including our firm commitment to make parents our
20 partners." This is a great sentiment, and I am proud
21 to have a mayor who understands the importance of
22 parent engagement, but unless there are systems and
23 supports to make this possible, it will never become
24 a reality. The truth is that parents and families
25 all across the city have been pushed out of their

schools and continue to be disenfranchised. This is because there aren't enough ways to engage parents. We believe that the Department of Education should be incubating and innovating new and exciting parent engagement models. Parents within CEJ have been at the helm of creating and uplifting models. CEJ proposes that the City Council support model initiatives for transformative parent engagement that will seed innovation across the city and establish the foundation for New York City to lead urban school districts nationally. Grounded in the work of Doctor Karen Mapp [sp?] in developing the US Department of Education Dual Capacity Framework for Family School Partnerships, CEJ proposes a package of initiatives that will set the bar for family school partnerships and increase parent participation and student achievement by strengthening the relationship between families and school staff, helping families feel more comfortable inside the school as well as help school staff feel more comfortable within the school community, developing parent skills and knowledge about how to support their child at home. We are uplifting five models of parent engagement. parent/teacher home visits, in this model that helps

1 to strengthen a relationship between teachers and
2 families by having a team of two teachers visit the
3 home in the summer, the questions teachers ask to
4 learn more about the family and to know what their
5 hopes, dreams and aspirations are for their child. A
6 second visit is conducted in the spring to continue
7 to strengthen that relationship. Academic parent
8 teacher teams: Teachers hold classroom meetings in
9 September as part of extended parent/teacher
10 conferences. At these meetings parents--at these
11 meetings, teachers present performance data for the
12 class, model activities for families and give parents
13 individualized instruction on their child's
14 performance. And parents can share learning
15 strategies. Parent advocacy program: Parents
16 advocates work in overcrowded classrooms with
17 struggling students. They receive weekly trainings on
18 schools, curriculum, teaching strategies for working
19 with struggling students and for their own students.
20 Parent resource centers which builds off the district
21 offices to ensure that parents have a means to
22 understand everything that is happening in their
23 school and in their district. And lastly, the parent
24 university. We want a comprehensive training program
25

1 based on existing model in Boston in which parents
2 can earn credits as well as college credits by
3 attending university and leading small and large
4 group trainings. These models are grounded in
5 research and have been proven results, increase in
6 parent participations, school climate, and
7 ultimately, student achievement. The parents of New
8 York City Coalition for Educational Justice would
9 like to see these programs funded in the DOE's budget
10 so that schools can start to put the mayor's
11 commitment to parent engagement into action. If the
12 DOE is unable to fund them, we hope that the Council
13 will step up and make sure that to include them in
14 their budget. Parent engagement is the key to
15 turning around student achievement, our schools, our
16 communities, and thus in turning around our city.

18 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you, Natasha.

19 NATASHA CAPERS: Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: We heard a little bit
21 from the Chancellor in regard to parent engagement.
22 I clarified the word "engagement" and "involvement"
23 with her. I don't think we were 100 percent satisfied
24 with some of her answers. She seemed to revert back
25 a little bit to the concept of parents doing some

1
2 work in school like around cooking classes and things
3 like that. I believe that the current parent academy
4 or as it's called, I think, is with LIU, am I not
5 mistaken?

6 NATASHA CAPERS: I believe that it was
7 contracted through LIU, and I believe that now it's
8 going to Learning Leaders, at least--well, then I
9 don't know.

10 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I believe it is LIU.

11 NATASHA CAPERS: Okay.

12 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So, is that
13 something--have you had any involvement with LIU?

14 NATASHA CAPERS: I haven't, no. We have
15 not.

16 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So you're parent
17 university that you're proposing, is that you would
18 hook up with a school or university?

19 NATASHA CAPERS: It would basically be--
20 it could be housing a district to really address the
21 needs of parents and students in that district and
22 really to help to hone in on the skills that parents
23 feel like they need to work on, but it's also a way
24 to partner with say like CUNY to ensure that parents
25 are growing their capacity and their skills as well

so that they can start to go onto further education if they deem that's something they want to do.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And what type of classes would you like to see?

NATASHA CAPERS: I think that a lot of parents whatever the skills are that they want. So, some parents may want to do things like learn another language, like myself, I desperately need to learn Spanish. Other parents may want to continue their degrees. Others may need to go back and perhaps get a GED. So, it really would depend on the needs of that family and what it is that that family deems necessary for themselves.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Fair Student Funding formula, how are you feeling about that?

NATASHA CAPERS: I'll let Maria take that one.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay.

MARIA BAUTISTA: I think that was going back to my point about equity, right? Like, we need to really--I don't know what the formula is and how it's weighted, but we need to definitely weigh things more seriously. We see that there are a lot of communities that aren't getting the resources that

1
2 for years have been denied access through resources
3 that don't have the programs that they need, and we
4 need to start addressing those gaps in those schools.
5 And so we really need to take a look at the formula
6 to see if it's really getting to these communities
7 and addressing the needs of like English language
8 learners, special needs students, students in high
9 poverty communities.

10 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Alright, good. I'm
11 going to end it there. We do have a few more panels.
12 We'll probably be here til eight o'clock tonight, but
13 I want to thank you for all coming in, and I
14 appreciate it very, very much. And our next panel is
15 Barbara Harris from Granny for Peace Brigade, Janet
16 Poppendieck, New York City Food Policy, Lisa Levy
17 from New York City Coalition against Hunger, Alexis
18 Henry, Citizens Committee for Children, Sarah
19 Fajardo, Coalition for Asian American Children and
20 Families, and Erin George from NYLPI. Yeah, New York
21 Lawyers for Public Interest. Okay, I do swear
22 everybody in. So, I'm going to ask if you would
23 raise your right hand please. Do you solemnly swear
24 or affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and
25 nothing but the truth and to answer Council Member

BARBARA HARRIS: Thanks. All of the groups I've heard so far have been requesting funding for programs, and I'm here to ask the Council--thank you very much, Council Member Dromm and I think Chin is--thank you, so much being here. I'm urging Council Members to vote to eliminate the approximately 1.5 million dollar tax levy allocated for a program, the Junior ROTC in 18 high schools in the city. We're supporting that program in these public high schools. The Committee on Education and Department of Education can find far better uses for 1.5 million of tax payer dollars in supporting a military program that is developed by the Pentagon. The little transparency or oversight of curriculum or goals achieved in military delivers the wrong message to our high schools students, and for many reasons, the Junior ROTC program should not be subsidized by New York City tax payers. First, the cost of the program. The federal government is paying slightly less than half of the cost for 40 military instructor's salary, including all the fringe benefits of the JROTC programs. The instructors are

not employees of the New York City Department of Education, but employees of the federal government. This sets a troubling precedent of having individuals who do not possess the requisite qualifications to be a teacher in the New York school system, yet are engaged in teaching high school students. The funds used to cover the remaining costs of JROTC instructor salaries and all normal employment taxes and benefits that also cover regular teachers is paid by the taxpayer. Each school with a JROTC program hires two instructors for their unit, which means that unlike most other subjects, two teachers are managing every JROTC class. These instructors are not required to have the same training and credentials as mandated for most NYC teachers. Some senior instructors may have a BA, but assistant teachers can be assigned with the minimum requirement of 20 college credits, yet they are paid the same salaries and benefits as regular accredited teachers. I'm skipping around a little bit if you're reading it, because I want to get to the heart of it. The program is described as developing leadership, citizenship and discipline, but little data records or reports of outcomes are every presented. The curricula focuses on military

values and hierarchy, the idea of soldiering, following commands, fitness and drills. It is a military training, not critical thinking. It is the military approach to social and political change. The curriculum is developed by the military and presents a partisan pro-military view of historical, political and moral issues. Curriculum content is decided by the military and the Department of Education does not control or oversee what is taught and appears to be out of the loop. There's no transparency. Since my time is running out already, just to highlight, the JRTOC teaching procedures follow a very authoritarian approach in teaching American history, civics, communications, inspiring students to find their own path, develop character, their character, and raise self-esteem should be taught by those teachers trained and certified to do so. But the most disturbing part of the program is the use of weapons. JRTOC students are given uniforms and vaccimily [sic] rifles, which are used for drills, parades and assembly programs. Each member of the JROTC marches into assemblies in uniform carrying rifles. Is this not hypocritical of the current school regulation of zero tolerance with

1 guns and weapons of any sort in schools. JROTC sends
2 the wrong message about weapons. Students cannot
3 bring weapons into school, but they read and learn
4 about handling them in JROTC textbooks. In the 2015
5 City Council allocation funding document, there's an
6 anti-violence 550,000 dollars has been allocated to
7 programs that teach anti-violence, anti-weapon and
8 conflict resolution strategies. How confused can the
9 student be? JROTC kids carry rifles. Guns are fun.
10 Guns are macho. War is a game. So what's going on in
11 the public high schools? And the overwhelming
12 majority of New Yorkers have no idea that the tax
13 payers are funding the JROTC program, and our
14 experience speaking with people in the streets has
15 informed us of this fact. They oppose JROTC. So,
16 citizenship, leadership and discipline can and is
17 successfully trained, taught by trained New York City
18 certified teachers, and we look forward to the
19 Council leadership on a significant educational
20 issue.

22 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you, Barbara.

23 And you know how I feel about this.

24 BARBARA HARRIS: I know.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I've gotten myself into a lot of newspapers because of my opinions that are very similar to yours, and so I applaud you for coming down and for continuing to speak out on this important issue, and we'd like to have some other conversations outside of this hearing about how we continue to fight this issue.

BARBARA HARRIS: Thank you so very much.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. Next, please.

JANET POPPENDIECK: Good afternoon. I'm Jan Poppendieck, the Policy Director of the New York City Food Policy Center at Hunter College in the CUNY School of Public Health. And I want to thank you for this opportunity to present our views on the education segment of the New York City budget. I'm here, as I said, on behalf of the Policy Center, which was created in 2012 to develop intersectoral [sic] innovative and evidence-based solutions to preventing diet related diseases and promoting food security in New York. We thank the City Council for financial support of our center and the Speaker's office. We urge the provision in the budget for the expansion of the universal free meals for all New

York City public schools. Providing a healthy lunch to all of our school children will contribute to the achievement to at least two of our center's fundamental goals, the reduction of diet related disease and the promotion of food security. In the long run, it will advance academic achieving and educational entrainment and thus contribute to the development of our city's economy. As I mentioned, the center is committed to evidence-based social policy, and I'm here to say that the evidence is in on universal free school meals. The figures that have been presented to you about an eight percent increase in participation in schools, middle school where the program was implemented. Eight percent may not sound like a great deal, but to have achieved that in four months with virtually no publicity is a remarkable outcome and really gives testimony to what I've heard all across the country, which is that stigma is indeed the primary barrier for participation for many students who are eligible. The other group of students who benefit enormously from the implementation of universal free schools meals are students who are not in fact financial income eligible for the free and reduced price, because

1
2 their family incomes are above the cut off, but who
3 are struggling financially. And many people don't
4 realize that the income eligibility cut off is the
5 same nationwide. It's the same in New York City
6 where costs are very high as it is in rural Alabama
7 where costs of living are low. So one reason the
8 program, the national school lunch program, has
9 thrived in the rural south is because that same
10 income eligibility cut off embraces a much larger
11 segment of the community. So, the evidence is in,
12 and we think it's time for the City Council to really
13 take a leadership role with the Chancellor's office
14 in making sure that they pay attention to the
15 evidence. I hope the council will continue to
16 interact with the Chancellor's office to find out
17 just how the six million from last year was used.
18 You raised some questions earlier about labor hours
19 and the concerns of the employees, but there's a
20 formula for labor hours per hundreds of meals served.
21 So they should in fact be expanding employment, which
22 is good for us all, which is good for the New York
23 City economy when people have those jobs, and those
24 are jobs that are compatible with being a parent.
25 Working on the school calendar is an asset,

1 especially for single parents. There's more to my
2 testimony, and I see that my time is out. So, I just
3 want to say that not only does it address the hunger
4 issue and enables students to eat a meal that's free
5 of shame, okay, but it also addresses the diet
6 related disease issue. School meals have gotten
7 healthier. New York City can take pride in its
8 leadership role. When we introduced citywide food
9 standards in 2008, we were ahead of the curve. The
10 federal government has somewhat caught up with us.
11 There is mounting evidence, and it's in here with
12 footnotes, that the meals prepared and served at
13 schools are healthier than meals sent from home, even
14 when parents pack a meal. So, we have an opportunity
15 here that we really need to seize. I think that given
16 the changed composition of the Congress at the
17 federal level, we had better get in on the community
18 eligibility option now while we're sure it's at hand.
19 I would lock it in if I were you.

21 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. And we are
22 going to follow up on that six million dollar
23 question, and a matter of fact, staff is already told
24 me that we did not see it in this preliminary
25 hearing, but that we should see it in the next

1 executive, because they just received the money. But
2 a thought occurred to me having heard your testimony
3 behind Barbara's, which is that wouldn't it be nice
4 if we put the 1.5 million out of the guns and into
5 feeding people, you know, and food for people rather
6 than arms for people, so.

8 BARBARA HARRIS: So funny because that was
9 the same as last time, I--

10 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: [interposing] Speak
11 into the mic. Speak into the mic.

12 BARBARA HARRIS: No, the last time I was
13 here and I had the 1.5 million, and the person next
14 to me was with Sports in Small Schools for two
15 million, and I just wanted to hand it to him.

16 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: It's all a matter of
17 priorities, and actually, a budget speaks to what the
18 priorities of the city are.

19 BARBARA HARRIS: Yes, right.

20 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Exactly. Exactly.
21 Thank you. Next, please. Yes.

22 LISA LEVY: Hi. I'm Lisa Levy, the
23 Director of Policy Advocacy and Organizing at the New
24 York City Coalition Against Hunger. I'm testifying
25 on behalf of the city's more than 1,100 soup kitchens

1 and food pantries and the more than 1.4 million New
2 Yorkers who live in households that can't afford
3 enough food. I want to first thank Chair Dromm and
4 the Education Committee for allowing me to testify
5 today. I will try to be brief as I have also
6 submitted written testimony. One in five kids in New
7 York City goes to school hungry every day. Children
8 who are hungry cannot learn, just as hungry adults
9 cannot work. New York City has made great strides to
10 get children to eat school meals, but we are still
11 behind. The city has great opportunity to improve
12 nutrition among food insecure and hungry children,
13 decrease childhood obesity and receive more revenue
14 from the federal government for the Department of
15 Education. The city can quickly and easily achieve
16 these outcomes by expanding the provision of
17 Breakfast after the Bell and universal school lunch.
18 As you heard Chancellor Farina testify, each day
19 schools across New York City offer universal free
20 school breakfast. They require no paperwork forms,
21 hassle or costs to the student. Despite the
22 simplicity of this process and the outreach efforts
23 of the DOE's Office of School Food to increase
24 participation in the school breakfast program, New
25

York City's participation has significantly lagged. According to a January 2015 report by the Food Research Action Center on school breakfast participation in 62 large urban school districts across the country, New York City ranked second to last with only 35.4 percent of the students receiving free or reduced price lunch also receiving free breakfast, 35.4 percent. That's a lot of room for improvement. Given that most school districts must now have a complex system in place to collect forms and data on the income of each student's parents to determine the eligibility of each child for either free reduced price or full cost meals. When a district adopts a universal breakfast or lunch policy, not only does it reduce the stigma faced by children and thereby increase participation, it also reduces the paperwork and bureaucracy, saving the school district time and money. Additionally, given that text books are widely understood to be a critical educational tool, public school districts typically lend them out free of charge to all students. The time is right for the nation to view school meals in the same way. Free breakfast and lunch should be universal to all classrooms. By

expanding breakfast in the classroom or the grab and go model in hallways, the Department of Education can improve nutrition, improve educational outcomes, decrease child obesity and receive more revenue from the federal government. We believe that a progressive, proactive and effective approach will be successful in expanding breakfast after the bell and universal school lunch. We hope we can count on the Education Committee, the rest of the City Council and Mayor de Blasio's entire Administration to make these programs happen. The 600,000 low income New York City School children who do not eat breakfast at school are counting on each of you. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much. We hear you. Breakfast for all. Thank you. Next, please.

SARAH FAJARDO: Good afternoon. My name is Sarah Fajardo, and I'm the Education Policy Coordinator for the Coalition for Asian American Children and Families. I would like to thank Chair Dromm and the members of the Education Committee for holding this important oversight hearing on the Fiscal Year 2016 preliminary plan. For nearly 30 years, CACF has been the nation's only Pan-Asian

children's advocacy organization. We work to improve the health and wellbeing of APA children and families in three policy areas, education, health and child welfare. CACF has identified several key needs faced by Asian Pacific American students. A high percentage of APA students are also first generation. These students and their families need translated and interpreted supports to navigate the school system, understand their language rights as student and parents and access resources to support student's learning. Thirty-five percent of New York City APA's and 22.4 percent of APA students are limited English proficient. Limited English proficiency creates barriers to parent participation at school events, discussions and meetings about students educational achievement as interpretation is not always easily accessible for our families. In New York City Schools, approximately 20 percent of English language learners students spoke an Asian language at home in 2012, the second largest language group after Spanish. The diversity of languages and dialects spoken by APA families makes community outreach and education challenging, and without targeted outreach, these communities will continue to be isolated. Many

1
2 APA's also have limited literacy in their native
3 languages. This underscores as well the necessity of
4 partnering with community based organizations and
5 community members to engage in direct outreach to
6 contact isolated families by phone, visits or word of
7 mouth. On behalf of the 40 Asian led and serving
8 community organizations that comprise our membership,
9 I urge the council to ensure that the DOE provides
10 cultural competency trainings for interpreters,
11 teachers and staff. Cultural competency helps ensure
12 that interpreters are sensitive, comprehensible, use
13 colloquial language, and that parents feel
14 comfortable engaging in conversations. CACF
15 encourages the DOE to implement cultural competency
16 trainings for school staff and students in a
17 coherent, integrated and systematized program that
18 discusses the need for cultural competency across
19 races, ethnicities, gender identities, sexual
20 orientations, religions, and physical and mental
21 abilities. Diversity training for staff were piloted
22 several years ago, but never widely implemented, and
23 we encourage the DOE to build on these efforts. We
24 have many more recommendations, and I see my time is
25 running out. So, I'll touch on a few of them. We

1 encourage the Education Committee to ensure that the
2 DOE conducts targeted parent engagement and outreach
3 campaigns beyond the proposed language access
4 campaign. We think this is a great start, but we need
5 much more targeted outreach. We encourage the DOE to
6 support the incorporation of socio/emotional supports
7 in school standards and in guidance services to
8 support increased and standardized guidance services
9 and staffing. Thank you so much for your continued
10 support for this campaign. We really appreciate all
11 that you've done in standing up for this ask for
12 community members. Ethnic studies is a critical
13 inclusion in DOE curricula, and we are heartened by
14 the inclusion of restorative justice responses in the
15 preliminary budget and in the recent changes to the
16 disciplinary code, and we encourage the DOE to fully
17 fund staff training. We're concerned about funding
18 levels for staff training and to ensure that these
19 are really successful programs. And finally, thank
20 again for your support for improved data collection
21 desegregation and reporting. Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And we're going to
24 have those hearings soon on the data collection. So,
25 stay tuned.

SARAH FAJARDO: We'll be there.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Yes, thank you.

SARAH FAJARDO: Thank you.

ALEXIS HENRY: Good afternoon. My name is Alexis Henry, and I'm the Policy Associate for Early Education and Education at Citizens Committee for Children. I would like to thank the Chairs, Chairs Dromm and Ferreras as well as the members of the City Council Committees on Finance and Education for holding today's hearing. CCC appreciates that Mayor de Blasio and Chancellor Farina have spent much of their first year re-evaluating various aspects of the city's education system and putting into place new ideas aimed at improving outcomes for children. CCC also appreciates the de Blasio Administration's commitment to expanding pre-k to every four year old and expanding after school programs for over 100,000 middle school students. We also appreciate the new investments in the preliminary budget, specifically literacy intervention teams, therapeutic intervention training, guidance counselors, girls' varsity teams and language learning, and we urge the City Council to support these. CCC also appreciates the City Council's longstanding commitment to investing

critical resources into the DOE to strengthen the programming available to public school children. We'll be urging the Administration to restore and base line the initiatives supported by the City Council in Fiscal Year 2015, and we hope the City Council will do so as well. In the executive budget, we hope to see additional investments into building new schools, reducing class size and enhancing the budgets of individual schools. We also urge you to support the following: One, school meals. Thank you to the City Council and the Public Advocate for the commitment to universal school lunch and Breakfast after the Bell. Your efforts have ensured that thousand more middle school students each lunch every day. CCC will be urging the Administration to maintain universal school lunch for middle school students and expanding this program to elementary and high school students. In addition, we'll be urging the Administration to maintain its campaign promise for universal breakfast after the bell/breakfast in the classroom. Number two, physical education. Quality physical education classes provides a number of health and academic benefits to children. Unfortunately, New York City's out of compliance with

state regulations regarding physical education. We urge all City Council members to sign on as co-sponsors of Intro 644, which is a data reporting bill, to pass Intro 644 and then to urge the Administration to implement reforms that will improve physical education in school, including hiring more certified PE teachers and addressing space issues. Number three, maintain elementary after school programs for 1,882 children. The DOE contract with 17 after school sites is due to expire on June 30th of 2015 without any intent by DOE to renew contract. In addition, DYCD has no funds to support nor the ability to take over the contract. This would cost 5.9 million. CCC urges the Administration and the City Council to ensure that we do not return to the days of cutting afterschool programs. The 17 sites and their corresponding Council Members are listed in our written testimony on page seven. Number four, school based health and mental health services. CCC will be urging the Administration to shore up the fiscal viability of current school based health and mental health clinics and then to expand the number of schools with on site health and mental health services. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much.

I appreciate you coming in. Next, please?

ERIN GEORGE: Good afternoon. My name's Erin George. I'm a Health Justice Advocate at New York Lawyers for the Public Interest, and I'm here today testifying on behalf of the PE for All Coalition. The PHYS-ED for all Coalition would like to thank Chairperson Dromm and the Education Committee for the opportunity to testify on the critical issue of New York City school funding. As the Council considers the city's education budget, we hope the Council will push to ensure that the DOE does more to help schools meet the state requirements for providing our children with physical education. Research shows that participation in quality PE enhances student's academic achievement, instills good habits for healthy living, and teaches critical skills such as teamwork. PE can help improve children's grades in standardized test scores, as well as their concentration and classroom behavior. PE improves physical fitness for all school children, and it's especially critical for students with obesity and related health problems. Despite the well documented benefits, the DOE schools routinely

fail to provide their students with the PE required by state regulations as part of the opportunity for a sound basic education to which all students are entitled under the state constitution. As our coalition recently testified at this committee's hearing on overcrowding, part of the issue is that New York City needs to invest more in school construction and maintenance. Our schools don't have enough gymnasiums, playing fields or playgrounds. Too many of the spaces we do have are falling into disrepair. Co-located schools struggle to schedule sufficient time for PE in their shared gymnasiums and spaces. Strained school budgets also inhibit schools' ability to hire certified PE instructors to help develop, implement and oversee comprehensive PE curricula. Schools also need guidance and assistance to best use the staff space that they have. Without these investments, our children won't get the PE that they need to promote lifelong healthy habits. Unfortunately, the lack of data on PE and our schools makes it difficult to evaluate whether the DOE is investing properly or effectively. The DOE's failure to make public and in many instances even track basic data on the quality and amount of PE instruction

hampers citywide efforts to improve access. This is why the PHYS-ED for All Coalition urges the Council to enact Intro 644 which will require the DOE to report on all aspects of PE including space and facilities in New York City schools. The goal will provide parents, communities and elected officials critical information about how PE in New York City is currently functioning and where the budgetary gaps lie. A reporting bill will inform where funding should be directed in order to have the greatest impact upon student's access to quality PE instruction. Intro 644 was introduced in February 2015 by Council Member Elizabeth Crowley, and it already has the bipartisan support of 28 Council Members, including the Chairs of the Education and Health Committees. We're grateful for your leadership on this as well. We urge the Council to hold hearings and bring this bill to a vote as soon as possible in order to better inform the appropriation of the New York City public school budget. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. And on physical education for all, I'm with you. Obviously, I'm on the bill. In my school we had 44 classes, but

1 we only had 25 gym periods. So you obviously could
2 not accommodate all those kids, never mind even meet
3 the state mandate. So we're going to look at this.
4 We'll hopefully get a hearing at some point in the
5 future. I don't know exactly when, but we want to do
6 some more on physical education.
7

8 ERIN GEORGE: Great. We appreciate it
9 very much.

10 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you for coming.

11 ERIN GEORGE: Thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And I want to thank
13 the panel for coming in, and I'm going to call the
14 next group up. Thank you. And I'm going to call
15 some students. If I can just ask the unions to bear
16 with me, because they have to go home. And so these
17 are--I hope I get it right--Ariana Jenkins [sp?]. Is
18 Ariana here? Yeah, oh, okay. Diamond Rivera? And
19 Ariana is from Bridges After School Union Settlement
20 and so is Diamond, and Nina Dastur from Union
21 Settlement, also. Okay, thank you. And I need to
22 swear you in, so if you'd raise your right hand. Do
23 you solemnly swear or affirm to tell the truth, the
24 whole truth and nothing but the truth and to answer
25

Council Member questions honestly? Okay, thank you.
Who'd like to start? Okay.

NINA DASTUR: Good afternoon.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Just pull that mic a
little closer.

NINA DASTUR: Good afternoon, Chairperson
Dromm, Council Member Chin. Thank you for the
opportunity to testify today. My name is Nina
Dastur. I'm the Director of Policy and Advocacy at
Union Settlement Association in East Harlem. We are
members of the Lunch for Learning Campaign, and I'm
here today with two of our students, Ariana Jenkins
and Diamond Rivera, from our Bridges After School
Program at Isaac Newton Middle School for Math and
Science. For the last year we've focused our civic
engagement and leadership development program on
supporting the lunch for learning campaign. We
joined the campaign because issues of health,
wellness and food insecurity are so pervasive in our
community, which is marked by high rates of obesity
and diet-related diseases and where too many families
struggle to afford food. We believe that an
appealing, healthy, free school lunch can play a
critical role in addressing all of these issues but

we know from a survey that our students did last year of their peers that the stigma attached to school lunch was undermining their participation. More than a third of the students that we surveyed reported that students were teased and that they believed that students would be teased for eating school lunch, and the impact and effects of that stigma were really striking. In our school where 98 percent of the students qualified for free school lunch, only 20 percent of the students reported eating it five days a week, and 42 percent reported that when they skipped school lunch, they went the whole day without eating anything. And we all know what impact that has on their school performance. We were so grateful for your leadership last year and the support of the Council in supporting the launch of the Middle School Free Lunch Initiative, and now we know from the recent analysis from Community Food Advocates that we were all right. It was a stunning success. More students in middle schools are eating school lunch, and on top of all the other benefits, the city's actually also benefitting financially, right? This is a no-brainer. Our students this year did another survey, and they may talk about it, and only 61

1 percent of their peers were actually aware of the
2 fact that school lunch is free for students in middle
3 school. So, we believe that with a really robust
4 public awareness campaign, those participation
5 numbers would go even higher. Now, what we know is
6 that we need to expand to elementary and high school
7 students, and we hope that the Council will
8 prioritize the expansion to truly universal free
9 school lunch in the budget for Fiscal Year 2016. I
10 want to note that my written testimony is longer and
11 has more details about the work that we've been doing
12 and also has statements from other students in our
13 program who weren't able to come on their field trip
14 today, but now I want to turn it over to Diamond and
15 to Ariana to tell you why they believe that the
16 Council should support universal free school lunch.
17 Thank you.

19 DIAMOND RIVERA: Good afternoon,
20 everybody. My name is Diamond Rivera. I go to Isaac
21 Newton Middle School and I'm in eighth grade. I'm in
22 the Lunch for Learning Program After School where we
23 have been working to make school lunch more
24 satisfying and valuable to students at our school.
25 Not many students at our school or other New York

1 City schools eat the school lunch and that has a
2 serious impact on our school work. At my school,
3 only 50 percent of students eat the school lunch more
4 than twice a week. This is sad because not many kids
5 are fortunate enough to be able to bring a nutritious
6 meal from home. When we talk to Isaac Newton
7 students, 95 percent said making school lunch free
8 would be fair and a good idea. However, many
9 students are still afraid of being teased if they
10 take it, if they take the school lunch. It's great
11 that school lunch is free for all middle school
12 students, but not fair if it isn't for elementary or
13 high schoolers. I will be in high school next year
14 and want to have a healthy affordable lunch to get me
15 through the day. If we make school lunch universally
16 free, more students will eat it. If we improve how
17 the food tastes, more students will eat it. And if
18 more students eat it, then we can remove the stigma
19 that only poor students eat the school lunch. That
20 is why it's important to us to make these changes.
21 Yesterday I was in class and after morning
22 announcements about school lunch I overheard my
23 friends say, "You should eat school lunch since it's
24 free. It's better than spending your money on junk."

ARIANA JENKINS: Good afternoon. My name is Ariana Jenkins and I'm in eighth grade at Isaac Newton Middle School. I'm a member of Lunch for Learning and have been working to understand why students do or do not eat school lunch. We are here to present because we want free school lunch for all and to bring a change to school lunch so that more students will eat. I recently found out that only 50 percent of the New York City children that are eligible for free or reduced price lunch actually eat it. This is upsetting, but I am not surprised. When the Bridges participants talked to our peers many didn't eat school lunch because they believed it wasn't appetizing or that it wasn't cool to eat it. Many still thought that middle school students had to pay for it and still spend the day hungry is that. I think that by making school lunch free for everyone we can fix this problem. If we also work to improve the school lunch, adding seasoning and varieties to

1 the food more students will eat it, and school lunch
2 wouldn't be considered uncool anymore. Today we are
3 asking you to continue to support our efforts in the
4 Lunch for Learning Campaign to make school lunch free
5 for all New York City public school students. Thank
6 you for having us.

8 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Well, thank you very
9 much for coming in. I really appreciate that. I think
10 that your testimony was really important, and as I
11 said, there was another group of young women here
12 prior to your testimony. I think it's probably the
13 most powerful testimony that we hear, is the impact
14 that the school lunches have or free school lunches
15 have on our students. So, I really appreciate you
16 coming in, and I know you had to wait a while to give
17 testimony, but I appreciate the fact that you stuck
18 it out. So, thank you very much for coming in.

19 ARIANA JENKINS: Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Alright, Dr. Randi
21 Herman from the Council for Supervisors and
22 Administrators, CSA, and Donald Nesbit from Local
23 372. I think John has been here with us since 10
24 o'clock this morning. So, he's a real soldier, you
25 know.

RANDI HERMAN: Yes, he is.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I need to swear you in. So if you'd raise your right hand. Do you solemnly swear or affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth and to answer Council Member questions honestly?

RANDI HERMAN: I do.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, and Dr. Herman, would you like to start?

RANDI HERMAN: Okay, I'm here representing the Council of School Supervisors and Administrators. My name is Doctor Randi Herman. I am the First Vice President. Just a year ago, Speaker Mark-Viverito said we're still not getting our fair share from the state, and the fair share as we know translates into 2.6 billion dollars in campaign for fiscal equity funds, which would go a very long way in supporting resources to our schools. We continue to stand with the Speaker and the Council in demanding our fair share of the education budget. That said, there's a lot of good news about the Mayor's education initiatives in New York City. The increased focus on parent engagement as positioned education is a priority for New York City families.

1 And the ways in which City Hall and the DOE have
2 strengthened the partnership between Department of
3 Education and the Early Childhood Education Centers
4 across the city ensured a smooth roll out of the UPK
5 expansion. CSA members rally behind the continued
6 expansion of after school programming at our middle
7 schools and applaud the 150 million dollar investment
8 in the Renewal Schools program. These initiatives
9 are a benefit to children and families and we support
10 the Mayor's continued expansion of what works.
11

12 Chancellor Farina has shown the light on the unmet
13 needs of our English language learners and students
14 with special needs and has made significant strides
15 toward aligning resources and supports in both those
16 areas. The Chancellor urged principals to hire more
17 guidance counselors and CSA supports that, too. I
18 have to pause here to remind us all that teachers of
19 English language learners, students with special
20 needs, guidance counselors, teachers of music and
21 art, science and physical education come with a
22 significant cost to schools. Additional funding for
23 the arts, which we know is often the game changer for
24 our students has to be included on the list of must
25 haves for schools rather than on the wish list. We

1 must adjust our school budgeting priorities to
2 support these essential elements of a sound public
3 education. I'd like to talk for a minute just about
4 one key component of great leaders in great schools
5 that's often overlooked, professional development.
6 The Chancellor knows from experience the value of
7 professional development. As educators, we move
8 through stages in our professional careers, and all
9 of us need to stay current in our practice. New York
10 City educational leadership requires a continuum of
11 quality professional development and CSA, through the
12 Executive Leadership Institute, with consistent
13 generous support from the City Council has been able
14 to provide research based professional development
15 for our members. For the ninth consecutive year,
16 with funding from the City Council grant and
17 supplemented with New York State Ed aid to
18 localities, the extraordinary school-based
19 intermediate supervisory institute mentoring program
20 will continue to provide 39 mentors for approximately
21 245 newly appointed first and second year assistant
22 principals, CSA directors and assistant directors of
23 city funded early childhood programs. These 39
24 mentors continue to engage in their own professional
25

1 development through ELI so that they can be as
2 effective as they work with school leaders. You have
3 a handout there with specific details about the
4 program and who has been served and in what way. The
5 City Council has consistently recognized and
6 supported our efforts. You've provided funding for
7 the continued professional development of school
8 leaders. We need your support now more than ever
9 before. The initiatives from City Hall and the
10 Department of Education have generated increased
11 demands for professional development for school
12 leaders. It's our hope that the Council will
13 maintain or even consider increasing funding for the
14 Executive Leadership Institutes so that we can
15 continue to meet the needs of the leaders of the New
16 York City public schools. Thank you, Council Member
17 Dromm and Council Member Chin for giving me the
18 opportunity to testify this afternoon.

19 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I have to say,
20 Margaret Chin has been here since 10 o'clock this
21 morning, too, so she deserves extra credit on that.
22 Doctor Herman, I heard that you mentioned in your
23 testimony, but I don't think it's in your written
24
25

1 testimony, a reference to ELI, to the Educators
2 Leadership Institute?

3 RANDI HERMAN: The educational
4 leadership, the Executive Leadership Institute.

5 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: The Executive
6 Leadership--

7 RANDI HERMAN: [interposing] It's in the
8 written testimony, but I brought today handouts for
9 you so that you could see exactly what programs
10 they've delivered to how many people, the topics,
11 subject areas, and how many people they've touched?

12 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Do we have that?

13 RANDI HERMAN: Yes.

14 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, good we got it.
15 So that's one thing we're very interested in doing,
16 because I think we increased the allotment from
17 300,000 to 600,000 last year, and we need those
18 statistics so that we go into budget negotiations, we
19 know what we're talking about, so we continue that
20 program.

21 RANDI HERMAN: And let us know if you
22 need any more about the current initiatives and how
23 many demands we have from the DOE to provide
24 additional services and from our members.
25

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: You have additional demands for?

RANDI HERMAN: For professional development from our members based on the new initiatives. They find they have specific needs in professional development so that they can meet these new initiatives.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Very good. Okay, that's good to know. I mentioned to the Chancellor near the end of her testimony about the possibility of looking at Early Childhood teachers younger than the four year olds, and I wanted to just raise that question. Do you have any ideas or thoughts about that that you'd like to share with us? I mean, they're all Early Childhood teachers?

RANDI HERMAN: They're all Early Childhood teachers. There are issues related to pay parity. There are issues related to stability. There are issues related to just workplace problems that generate from the salary disparities. So, I think through collective bargaining we can address a lot of that, and that's supposed to be coming soon. The city's contract rounds are getting closer to the Early Childhood contracts. As you know, they're in

1
2 the service contract category. So, those teachers
3 deserve every penny they get, but the higher we raise
4 that salary, if we don't balance it out with the
5 raises for those who supervise them, we've just
6 created another area of discontent.

7 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So I said to the
8 Chancellor that there are some teachers in four year
9 old pre-k classrooms who are making more than the
10 directors of their centers, and that that--

11 RANDI HERMAN: [interposing] That's
12 correct.

13 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: needs to be rectified.
14 I also mentioned to the Chancellor that there are
15 teachers in three year old classrooms who are
16 qualified just as the same as the four year old room
17 who are being paid much less than the teachers of the
18 four year old room. So, I hope that as you go into
19 contract negotiations this will be negotiated out,
20 and ultimately, I really believe that all educators
21 should be under one department and that's Department
22 of Education.

23 RANDI HERMAN: We couldn't agree more.

24 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, great. Thank
25 you. And I think we're going to go to Donald.

DONALD NESBIT: Good afternoon Education Committee Chair Dromm and Finance Chair--Committee Chair Ferreras and distinguished members of the committee. My name is Donald Nesbit and I'm the Executive Vice President of Local 372. I would like to thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on the Mayor's proposed budget for 2016 for education. As Executive Vice President of Local 372, I represent close to 23,000 Department of Education employees who perform essential services for the children of New York City. Most Local 372 members work in the communities in which they live, spend money, pay taxes, and vote. They not only take their job seriously, they take them personally with a very strong sense of commitment. Our members provide the support services that are essential to making our 1.2 million school children learning ready. I want to commend the mayor for his vision and bold reforms that brought thousands of UPK seats to kids across the city, for making municipal ID's available to hard-working immigrants, and additionally, affordable housing to New Yorkers. I also commend the mayor for creating a pilot program that would bring universal lunch to middle schools and expanding breakfast in

the classroom. But most importantly, we want to thank the Mayor for not making cuts to the education budget. In previous years, school leaders dealt with severe budget cuts and had to make tough choices as to what programs and services would be eliminated in an attempt to balance the school budget.

Essentially, they had to do more with less. In an attempt to balance a school budget, school leaders were forced to eliminate valuable staffing positions and programs that help keep students engaged. SAPIS, Substance Abuse Prevention Intervention Specialists, work with students and their families to keep our children from being at risk of drug, alcohol abuse and related violence. Local 372 SAPIS specialized in substance abuse prevention, anti-bullying, violence prevention, confidence building, goal setting, and gang prevention to just name a few. Our 243 SAPIS service all schools in all 32 districts and all students from K to 12. They are from the community, serving the most vulnerable. There is a dire need for one SAPIS in every New York City school.

However, at this point, we are requesting funding for an additional 500 SAPIS, which would bring us to staffing levels of 2002. In 2006 there were 502

SAPIS servicing all five boroughs. As of today, there are only 243. There are 1.2 million school children in our school system in New York City, over 1,200 schools in New York City, multiple schools in single school buildings, and only 243 SAPIS workers. This is one SAPIS counselor in five schools. This is unacceptable, especially in light of recent uptake in the use of alcohol, illegal and prescription drugs. Moreover, we have seen the proliferation of synthetic drugs, epidemic level use of heroin, and the introduction of alcohol use at a younger age. With the pressures of social media, children need all the support they can get to stay away from the increased social pressures. Parent coordinators, there should be a parent coordinator in every school. Are you aware that parent coordinators are not required to be in every New York City high school? Citywide, we have 737 parent coordinators and community associates. A PC plays a key role in not only keeping parents informed, but serve as a liaison between the school's administration and parents. 2002, the Mayor and the Chancellor created the position of parent coordinator to ensure that there was someone in each school directly responsible for

supporting families. Parent coordinators assist parents with language barriers, handle HRA paperwork, work along with city agencies to provide services directly to parents and work with adult and last chance learners. Parent coordinator's salaries are set by the principal, but can make--but they can make a minimum of 34,000 with a Bachelor's Degree. Parent Coordinators have become a necessary and vital part of the school system after mayoral control took effect. They help parents feel more comfortable in navigating what can be an intimidating, bureaucratic environment and force the greater parental involvement in the education of New York City's school children. They maintain contact with larger communities such as faith based groups who provide assistance on issues such as healthcare, after school activities and mentoring. Many go beyond the call of duty every day to protect our children, help our families to find new homes after losing their apartments and helping parents to get jobs. Our schools cannot run smoothly without parental involvement. Parent coordinators are crucial in giving parents a say, and respectfully request 500 more parent coordinators.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Mr. Nesbit, can you just summarize for us?

DONALD NESBIT: Yeah.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: What I'll do is-- because I have some questions I want to ask you as well and some information about questions that I did ask the Chancellor, which will probably get at the heart of the matter as well. So, if you could just quickly summarize?

DONALD NESBIT: Okay, I'm just going to go into the conclusion. In conclusion, the job of school leaders and teachers is to provide the instruction, support and resources that children need and demand. However, it is a moral obligation of our schools to provide adequate school staffing in order for schools to function. Local 372 members are essential to the running of New York City school--the New York City school system. They allow teachers and administrators to do their job and provide services in schools that keep our children off the streets and out of jails that will send them to college and into the workforce that will allow them to grow into adulthood with the equality and opportunity they deserve. Once again, we ask for funding for

additional Local 372 supportive staffing in schools.

Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Great. So, earlier today when the Chancellor was here I did bring up the issue of parent coordinators and asked her to consider having one parent coordinator in every school. I think the problem exists mostly in high schools, and I said to her, which was what was told to me by a principal actually, that you have to stay on top of those kids even more sometimes when they're in high school rather than when they are young, and to facilitate that type of communication is really important to have somebody at the school level who can work with parents. So we did address that. She did not give us an affirmative answer, but I said I would like to speak with her further about that issue because I believe deeply in those parent coordinators as being somebody that works closely with the principal to bring those parents into the school. She did speak in terms of parental engagement in the schools, but I think that piece of it is very, very important. The other piece that we got to--well, of course, we spoke a lot about universal school lunch, but in that discussion we talked about some of the

1 costs that might be involved. And in previous
2 conversations that I had with you we acknowledged
3 that there's a need for additional school lunch
4 employees as well. Have you had any meetings with
5 the lunch people who testified here before, universal
6 free lunch people, to determine what the cost might
7 be so that we can get a number to the Chancellor in
8 terms of first middle school, but then universal free
9 lunch overall?
10

11 DONALD NESBIT: Well, we've had like
12 coalition meetings, but we haven't had one on one
13 meetings. We look to do that in the near future.

14 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Because one of the
15 things that I'm trying to get to push this issue
16 forward is just a cost estimate, because the
17 Chancellor put up the issue of the cost as being one
18 of the factors that prevents them from moving
19 forward. I think, philosophically we agree that, you
20 know, universal lunch is the way to go on this issue,
21 but she says that there is a need for these
22 additional workers, and I can understand that as
23 well, and I agree, and I think that we're
24 understaffed as it is. So, if we could try to come
25 up with some type of a figure on that, I think that

would be very beneficial to the discussion moving forward.

DONALD NESBIT: Okay, well as a estimate, if we could do some multiplication, the average school lunch worker who works four or five hours a day, they only make about 15 to 20,000 dollars a year.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Amazing.

DONALD NESBIT: So, you add that times 500 that we're requesting for I think is around 10 million or so.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And then the question was raised that they have already received six million dollars in funding or will receive that very shortly if they haven't actually received it to offset some of those costs. So, I think going into the executive budget, that's one of the things that we want to look at and ask, how much additional funding would be necessary, would be needed to you know, make it universal, truly universal for everybody going forward. The other issue of major importance with me in regard to the members of your union are the school crossing guards. Now, I had a terrible incident about a week ago in my district

1 where a school crossing guard, a beloved school
2 crossing guard, was hit by a car and critically
3 injured. School crossing guards put their lives on
4 the line every single day for our students. I
5 understand that you're talking with the
6 Administration and you may not be able to tell too
7 much about what's going on there, but from what I
8 understand, school crossing guards are paid
9 approximately 10 dollars an hour if I'm not mistaken.
10 Is that correct?

12 DONALD NESBIT: Yes.

13 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And we are
14 understaffed in terms of our school crossing guards?

15 DONALD NESBIT: Yes, there are 325
16 vacancies. They are not people coming forward to
17 fill out applications because at 10 dollars an hour
18 you can't afford to live in New York City.

19 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And irregular hours in
20 the sense they come for two hours in the morning, two
21 at lunch, and one in the afternoon?

22 DONALD NESBIT: Yes, and also in the
23 citywide contract, there's a cap on their hours where
24 they can't work more than 25 hours a week.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And are there any discussion to raise that cap going on, or is that an objective of yours?

DONALD NESBIT: Well, it is an objective from our end. We are in discussions with the Administration and it seems like the city's Administration is geared towards lifting these things. There was a conversation with the Police Commissioner on that issue of lifting the cap, but I think he wants the monetary figures attached to that.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: We always want money.

RANDI HERMAN: If I may?

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Yes.

RANDI HERMAN: Crossing guards is a subject near and dear to a principal's heart. Many of our schools had crossing guards who retired. They weren't replaced. In addition, please understand that the principal doesn't get the job posting for crossing guard to circulate within the school community. From what I was given to understand that posting is at the local precinct, and honestly, the person who sees that bulletin board is not the member of your school community that you would encourage to take that job. And we have asked repeatedly for the

principal to get the posting so that it can be circulated among the school community and among the families, because that's who you want out there with those children.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So what is the number we're down by?

DONALD NESBIT: Well, there's 325 vacancies here in the city. Like she had mentioned, our biggest concern is advertisement. How are you advertising that there's job openings when a police officers, when you're advertising for the police officer job you see it on the train, you see it at the bus stop. You see it. It's in the newspaper. However, you never see a school crossing guard posting anywhere. The advertisement is last.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Would--if you had those numbers increased, would that give a school crossing guard for every school in the city?

RANDI HERMAN: No.

DONALD NESBIT: No, we'll still be limited. We still wouldn't have enough, especially on the priority corners like Northern Boulevard where the school crossing guard was actually hit. Some corners need two or possibly three school crossing

guards. They're just that big, in locations like Queens Boulevard. You think of Flatbush Avenue in Brooklyn. You need more than one crossing guard there, and some of those corners don't even have one.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I know in my district, what used to actually be part of my district--my district still borders on it at Junction Boulevard and the Long Island Expressway. If you can imagine, there's a four corner, or actually an eight corner intersection there and kids have to cross under the LIE on the service road of the LIE, and for years there was no school crossing guard there. Really amazing. You know, one of the mayor's priorities is Vision Zero, and so I think that we need to make this a big part of that program and ensuring the safety of our students on the way to school is a priority for everyone in the school community.

RANDI HERMAN: And particularly with the expansion of the Community Schools Initiative, schools are going to be open longer hours. The building will be open longer hours. You'll have families coming and going at other hours. You need somebody there at that intersection.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So we are working with NYPD and the DOE in terms of trying to get them to share those postings. I'm not at privilege right now to say exactly what it is that we're doing, etcetera, so forth and so on, but this is a common sense approach that I think they need to take.

DONALD NESBIT: If I may, Councilman, I was at a safety meeting in Brooklyn about a month and a half ago and there was some principals there who were requesting that they get a school crossing guard at their junior high schools, and the NYPD's response was, "Well, we don't put school crossing guards at junior high schools." And that was the first time I actually I started--if I could remember growing up, that I actually started to going to school on my own, and I went with my friends and we fooled around in junior high school. So, I think there's more of a need in junior high school also for a school crossing guard to be there, but I think the NYPD, the response that day was--and there was principals asking. They were begging for school crossing guards, and NYPD's response was, "Junior high school, there's not a need for it."

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Well, that's very disturbing to hear, because on Northern Boulevard and 80th Street in December of 2013, perhaps, maybe 2012 I had a 12 year old boy killed because there was no crossing guard there. And now, I believe that there is a crossing guard there, but it shouldn't take the death of a child or the death of a crossing guard to really take a good look at this policy and see what we can do to improve the situation.

RANDI HERMAN: And also, we have to remember, children who are coming to school very often have their earbuds in or they're texting while they're walking, and they're not paying attention to traffic.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Well, this boy had just gone to the deli to get his little snack. I, you know--terrible.

RANDI HERMAN: Shouldn't happen.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: No, it's always terrible. So, anyway, thank you. And I really appreciate you coming in and giving your testimony.

DONALD NESBIT: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Alright, okay. Casey Foster [sp?] from Urban Youth Collaborative. Latonia

[sp?] Haldip [sp?] from Make the Road, Matthew Evans, Urban Youth Collaborative Future of Tomorrow, Onyx Walker [sp?], Urban Youth Collaborative as well, Ebony Towns [sp?] Urban Youth Collaborative, Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice, Latrell Stone, Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice Urban Youth Collaborative. And thank you all for waiting. I see you sitting back there, and it's been a while for you, a long hearing as well. Certainly been patient and we want to hear your testimony. And we have one final panel after this. So, if you intend to speak and you have not filled out one of these forms, please do so or forever hold your breath. Thank you. I have to swear you all in. If you'd raise your right hand please? Do you solemnly swear or affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth and to answer Council Member questions honestly?

UNIDENTIFIED: Yes.

UNIDENTIFIED: I do.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you.

CASEY FOSTER: So, I want to thank Council Member Dromm for continuing to be a advocate for all students in New York City, and I know many of

you up there have probably been there since 10, Council Member Chin is one [sic], so we want to thank you for being here for us. And I'm going to turn it over to our youth leaders.

MILTYANA HOLDIB: Sorry. Good afternoon. My name is Miltiana Holdib [sp?]. I'm a junior at the Brooklyn School for Math and Research in Bushwick Campus and a youth leader at our Student Success Center. Youth leaders are responsible for helping our peers fill out college applications for SUNY and CUNY applications. They're also responsible for finding scholarships, completing the free application for federal student aid, and promoting college going [sic] culture. The Student Success Center is more than just a college office. It's a safe place that students feel like we own a part of and where we can help each other reach our dreams. College is a gateway to which your future holds. For example, getting a degree can open you up to several different opportunities that can benefit you in the future. Just getting a high school diploma doesn't grant you such opportunities. Some schools in our city have one counselor trying to help support 500 or more students go through the college process. By putting

1 a Student Success Center in more high schools, that
2 provides more support to guidance counselors and puts
3 people--and puts the people most invested in their
4 education at the center of a building towards a
5 college going culture. Also, as a student helping a
6 student on a peer to peer level that student would
7 seem more comfortable and easier to communicate with
8 than adults, because you're in the same age group as
9 that student. It also makes communication easier to
10 communicate with YL's about simple questions which
11 they can ask during school hours to find out basic
12 information about colleges or the college classes.
13 This is because youth leaders are knowledgeable,
14 because we have attended summer training on how to
15 help students throughout the college process. Having
16 a Student Success Center is beneficial in every way
17 the school students and our futures, but right now,
18 we still have many students that aren't supported
19 because their school doesn't have the resources to
20 help them. We should scale up Student Success
21 Centers as one solution to help more students enroll
22 in college.

24 LATRELL STONE: We are a coalition of
25 organizations led by youth that come together to

fight for racial justice in our public school system.

Every year, New York City dedicates at least 300

million dollars towards over policing and excluding

black, Latino, LGBTQ and students with disabilities

through a broken windows approach to school

discipline. There is no evidence that heavily

investing in police in schools create a safer

learning environment or contributes to the overall

improvement of the school. Research shows that the

affect is actually the opposite. Students do not

feel safer and there is no improvement in the

learning environment or achievement. What happens in

those schools are students are more likely to be

arrested or given a summons and all students feel

disengaged and disconnected from the school. We

continue annually spend 300 dollars per student on

creating what feels like a jail environment, and

going into the 2015 to 2016 school year it looks like

we are going to spend 1.2 million of restorative

justice training for educators and administrators,

roughly one dollar per student. It should not come

to surprise as anyone that black and Latino students

make up 89 percent of all students suspended and

arrested in our schools and 93 percent all youth in

the juvenile justice system. This is the return on our investment that we should respect--expect. There are many educators and students leading the fight to dismantle school to prison pipelines, and we believe the Administration fully believes in the need to change our approach to the school discipline, but we are not going to build the buy-in [sic] we need and fully support schools to successfully change their approach without fully investing in additional staff and comprehensive school-wide training and restorative practices for all school-based staff. As black and Latino graduation rates have continued to go over the last several years, we have yet to see the school district develop a comprehensive plan to equitably support all students, especially students in historically under-resourced schools due to college exploration process. Seventy percent of all youth in New York City that do not attend college or employed have a high school diploma. Our benchmark for success must go beyond getting students to graduate. We have high schools that have one to 700 guidance counselor to student ratios. What are we going to do to address these inequalities? It is not enough to acknowledge that schools are inequitably

JULIAN THOMPSON: Okay. I will be speaking on behalf of Ebony Maria [sp?], another member of my organization. I am Julian Thompson of Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice and the Urban Youth Collaborative. We need the Department of Education to fully invest in getting us to college. New York City's graduation rates are going up, but many of us are not receiving the kind of support we need to successfully enroll and enter college. I am lucky because I go to high school where we have a college center where counselors help us through the college process all the way from taking the PSAT to filling out the FASFA to writing our personal statements. It is the same kind of support that our schools provide through Student Success Centers or having dedicated college counselors, but the truth is there are still too many students that don't have support that don't know if they're on track with the credits to graduate, that don't know about taking the PSAT or how many times they should take the SAT's. Right now, we are investing in students like high school graduation as the finish line. It is not the

1
2 finish line for us. It is the beginning of our
3 future, the beginning of our future of the people
4 that are going to run this city. Investing in
5 Student Success Centers, college counselors and
6 Summer to Bridge [sic] College programs is an
7 investment in the future of our city. Thank you.

8 MATTHEW EVANS: Good evening. My name is
9 Matthew--huh? Oh. My name is Matthew Evans and I'm a
10 youth leader with Future of Tomorrow and Urban Youth
11 Collaborative. This fall I'll be a freshman enrolling
12 in college. I'm a first generation student in my
13 family. Going to college I thought was like a
14 fantasy, but I never thought it would be a reality.
15 I walked into the Student Success Center ran by
16 Cypress Hill Local Development Corporation on the
17 Franklin K. Lane [sic] Campus and was wondering,
18 like, who's going to help me, because guidance
19 counselors are not prevalent in schools. There's so
20 many students. During my time in my high school I
21 don't remember meeting with my guidance counselor to
22 discuss college. In a school with so many students,
23 like I said, he was always busy and never had enough
24 time to provide the intense one on one training with
25 the students during the college process, which is

1 very important. I'm thankful as--I'm thankful as I'm
2 getting ready to graduate. I got accepted to so many
3 schools. I don't think I would be there. I don't
4 think I would be accepted without the Student Success
5 Center. But without the Student Success Center,
6 where would I be? What happened to all the other
7 schools that doesn't have a Student Success Center,
8 when they have that one guidance counselor? Where
9 are they at? Where are they at? It's sad. It's sad
10 to say that these schools without the Student Success
11 Centers, they're--these kids are not going to
12 college. I wouldn't be where I am now without the
13 Student Success Center. It's important to invest in
14 Student Success Centers and other programs working in
15 the city. Almost 50 percent of all students that
16 apply to college in the fall don't end up going to
17 college that year. We need more money for pre-k. We
18 need more money for after school programs. We need
19 more money for junior high school. We also need
20 money for what happens after high school. And right
21 now, it feels like the students in high school are
22 being forgotten. Thank you.

24 ONYX WALKER: Good afternoon. My name is
25 Onyx Walker. I'm a youth leader with Future of

1 Tomorrow and the Urban Youth Collaborative. The
2 Department of Education should invest in restorative
3 justice. It has been proven over and over again that
4 suspensions and zero tolerance policies are not
5 working. They have instead resulted in schools
6 pushing out students with disabilities and students
7 of color like myself and Matthew. Our Mayor and
8 Chancellor have said that we have to start doing
9 things differently, but when will we invest in a new
10 approach? In my high school we had a peer mediation
11 program a few years ago. A teacher volunteered time
12 to be in charge of running the program with the
13 student leaders. Due to her being called to perform
14 other duties in the school and a lack of funding, we
15 had to discontinue our peer mediation program. Many
16 of the high schools that have been trying to start
17 peer mediation programs and other restorative justice
18 programs have had the same thing happen. We can't
19 expect to do it the right way if schools don't have
20 resources to continue doing the work right. If the
21 education budget provides money into restorative
22 programs, we would be able to hire a restorative
23 coordinator and get peer mediation back into our
24 schools. Restorative practices have been proven to
25

1
2 reduce suspensions, repair relationships and build
3 community in schools. There is research coming out
4 that shows it is having a positive effect on
5 graduation rates, attendance and other learning
6 outcomes. When we make priorities, we find it the
7 funding to make things happen. When we hear there is
8 no money in the budget for restorative justice but
9 there's money for testing and there's money for the
10 NYPD and there's money for other programs, we hear
11 ending the school to prison pipeline is not a
12 priority. Thank you for hearing my testimony.

13 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much.
14 Where am I hearing that clapping? Yes. Give them a
15 round of applause.

16 [applause]

17 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: They deserve it.

18 UNIDENTIFIED: I would just--a couple of
19 the numbers that we're still unclear on, we know
20 annually, Latrell said, we spend about 300 million on
21 NYPD. That goes directly from the Department of
22 Education to the NYPD. What we've seen so far in
23 this budget coming up is that there's going to be 1.2
24 million spent on training schools and restorative
25 practices, and not in a school-wide training, but a

1 couple staff members from a school to get training.
2
3 And so, I think when we juxtapose those two numbers,
4 right, the 300 million for security and policing and
5 1.2 million for restorative justice, I think for us
6 that's just not an acceptable way to go into the new
7 school year.

8 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Just checking the
9 figures on that and looking at that and highlighting
10 that as well, I couldn't agree more. I've been at a
11 number of rallies with your organization as well
12 prior to being elected as Chair of the Committee, and
13 it does leave one to see it's a warped sense of
14 priorities when we have more school safety agents
15 than we do guidance counselors in our schools, and
16 when we see the budget for those officers versus the
17 budget for restorative justice type programs. But
18 since I've been elected Chair of this committee, that
19 has been a priority for us, and I think at almost
20 every meeting that I've had, because I meet fairly
21 regularly with the Chancellor, that is something that
22 we've been pushing on. I think philosophically also
23 she's there with us on that issue.

24 UNIDENTIFIED: Absolutely.
25

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And she has begun to institute some changes in the system to make that a reality. Now, we weren't very happy with the overall change in the discipline plans. I think many of the advocates wanted to see more there as well, and I think we should still continue to advocate for that, but there have been some changes. But I do want to thank you, Casey, for always bringing people in or for young people coming in with you to really make us realize the impact that these policies have on actual human lives. And that to me is the greatest impact that we can have. So, I want to thank all of the young men that you brought with you and the young woman as well who is here. But let me just ask them a couple of questions, too, because you know, some of those changes have begun to take effect in the schools. Like, now the Chancellor's been talking a little bit about the retraining of the school safety agents. Have any of the young people here begun to see any change in the approach or the attitude of the school safety officers?

UNIDENTIFIED: So, I'm going to--Onyx, you should stay there, because their organization has actually started these youth based training for the

1 school safety agents in their school in Franklin K.
2 Lane [sic], and so they can talk about, you know, the
3 training that you've been doing at your school and
4 what effect it's having. And this isn't--this is not
5 the training that the school safety agent officers
6 are doing. Their organization has actually started
7 to train the school safety agents at their school.
8

9 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And which
10 organization?

11 UNIDENTIFIED: Future of Tomorrow Cypress
12 Hills Local Development Corporation.

13 ONYX WALKER: Okay, we've spoke with a
14 few school safety agent officers.

15 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Can you just speak up
16 a little bit?

17 ONYX WALKER: We spoke with a few school
18 safety agent officers, and I think like the problem
19 with the--it was just communication, like a block in
20 the barrier between the two. So, all it took was I
21 guess a little bit of understanding, meeting, some
22 one on ones, and I guess the level of understanding
23 that we have for one another, it ends up rising. So,
24 there's a better communication with all the students
25

and the school safety agents in the past few months anyways.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: You know, when I--I was a teacher for 25 years, and I had run in's with school safety agents in my school, believe it or not in my own school, who actually asked me for identification before they would let me in the building, and I was like, "Wait a minute. I'm the UFT Chapter leader here, you know?" I believe deeply in what you just said. I think that when we can get our agents to look at people as human beings it makes a huge difference, and I think communication facilitates that, and so I'm glad to hear that. And you feel that that's going well on your level? That's at Franklin K. Lane?

ONYX WALKER: Uh-hm, yeah.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: High School? Do you both go to Franklin K. Lane?

UNIDENTIFIED: Yes, sir.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And you agree?

UNIDENTIFIED: Yes, sir.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Are you part of the program there as well?

UNIDENTIFIED: Yes, sir.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, good. How about the other folks?

CASEY FOSTER: Anyone else want to talk about what it's--

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: [interposing]
Anything going on in your schools?

CASEY FOSTER: Changes with the SSA's?

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Any changes with school safety agents?

LATRELL STONE: Well, the school I attend is East Bronx Academy, and the whole relationship between the students and the school safety agents sort of like changed. Say about three years ago, the school safety agents would be very handsy [sic] and would be quick to like grab a hold of students, and the students wouldn't really feel safe when the student safety agents would do that, because it almost feels like they're attacking or just constricting them, but now say like today in 2015, the school safety agents will only grab a student if like really, really necessary. Otherwise, it's like more of a delicate approach, per say. Like, they will just try to calm the student down, but if the students showing like no stopping, they would have to

go on for several minutes before the student school safety agents will really do anything.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So on the other side of the issue, do you see any increase in terms of kids that are acting out because they think it might be easier?

LATRELL STONE: No, they are not. They're not acting out [sic].

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: You think kids respect the respect, so to speak?

LATRELL STONE: Repeat that.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: That kids respect the idea that school safety officers are giving them more respect?

LATRELL STONE: Yes, that's correct.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Good.

CASEY FOSTER: Onyx, were you going to say something?

ONYX WALKER: No, I was just going to agree with--

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: [interposing] You want to what, agree?

ONYX WALKER: I was just going to agree with what he said.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Agree?

ONYX WALKER: Yeah.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay.

CASEY FOSTER: We do--and I'm not sure what it is in the budget, but I believe--so they've extended the training for school safety agents by I think by about two weeks, and part of the training I think they're now going to be offered is collaborative problem solving. Which is, you know, we actually commend. It's a very, I think, effective way of de-escalating issues and building better relationships in schools.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Alright. And just I'm curious to know, this young man here, I'm sorry I didn't get your name in the black hoodie. Matthew?

MATTHEW EVANS: Me?

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Yeah, you, with the New York Yankees cap on.

MATTHEW EVANS: Oh, yeah, my name is Matthew.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Where are you thinking about going to college?

MATTHEW EVANS: I'm going to SUNY Cobleskill [sic].

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, very good.

MATTHEW EVANS: Yeah, I made up my mind.

On the regards of the--yeah, like I feel like now that I'm leaving there's a whole--there's going to be generations and generations going to my school. My family went--my family, my uncles and auntees [sic] went to Franklin K. Lane and it's changed so much. Like, I want the SSA's to be more respectful, which they are now, and I feel like now I'm making a difference and leaving my mark and leaving my legacy there.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Well, thank you for your story. How did you manage to get, you know, to the point where now you're going to college? You did that mostly on your own?

MATTHEW EVANS: The Student Success Center helped me with everything. It's a very good program.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay.

CASEY FOSTER: So, we have about--there are about nine Student Success Centers on high school campus, including Fannie Lou Hamer in the Bronx, Franklin K. Lane, Bushwick, and the Taft campus in the Bronx, and because there are four or five schools

in all those campuses, they serve about 17 schools.

But actually, Cypress Hill's also runs a middle

school Student Success Center, which supports

students with making the high school choice, which we

know is a very difficult choice for families,

especially families that don't have the kind of

knowledge and social capital that other families may

have, and what high school you go to in New York City

is actually the biggest indicator of whether or not

you go to college after high school. And that right

now the Department of Education dedicates through

post-secondary planning office, they dedicate 600,000

dollars to running Student Success Centers. And

students that work in them, they get a stipend during

the year. They're trained by CUNY over the summer in

an intensive five week course on how to be a college

advisor. Under the last Speaker, the City Council

also used to provide funding for Student Success

Centers in schools, but we no longer receive that

funding.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Well, you lost it

last year?

CASEY FOSTER: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And you're receiving
now 600,000?

CASEY FOSTER: Post-secondary planning
and Department of Education commits 600--they have
600,000 committed last year--

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: [interposing] They
have--

CASEY FOSTER: at least 600,000 committed
this year as well.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, good. Thanks for
those figures too. It's important for us to look at
that. Alright. Thank you very much. I'm going to
call the next panel. Thank you for coming in. Thank
you for waiting. Thank you. Good luck.

[applause]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Alright. These guys
really get the star for waiting for last. Beth
Broderick, the Center for Court Innovation. Looking
forward to hearing what you have to say. Eric Pryor,
the Center for Arts Education, the same. New York
Immigration Coalition, Max Ahmed. Max, you've been
here a long time, too. Kim Sykes, New York
Immigration Coalition. Same thing. And Wendy
Chapman, Build Schools Now. Okay, can I ask you all

to raise your right hand so I can swear you in?

Thank you. Do you solemnly swear or affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth and to answer Council Member questions honestly?

Very good. Thank you. Who'd like to start? Over here, alright. Okay, yep.

ERIC PRYOR: Yes. Good afternoon. I'm Eric Pryor, the Executive Director at the Center for Arts Education. I want to thank Chair Dromm and all the members of the Education Committee for the opportunity to testify today on the city's budget. I want to start by thanking you all for your leadership in making arts education a priority in last year's budget. The 23 million allocated by the Council and the Mayor in last year's budget has gone a long way towards addressing inequities in the delivery of arts education. Tens of thousands of city students identified in the city Comptroller's report now have access to arts education experiences. You all deserve a credit for stepping up to the plate, initially proposing the funding line in your budget response. Thank you for taking the lead. I'm here to ask you to continue to fund the initiative annually at 23 million, building on the great work

1 already being done such as the hiring of arts
2 teachers in over 84 schools. One hundred and 20
3 schools have received grants to partner with arts and
4 cultural organizations addressing priorities ranging
5 from English language learners, students with special
6 needs to parent engagement. Eight million has been
7 committed to purchase instruments and other
8 technology and to refurbish neglected art spaces in
9 city schools. Borough arts directors have been hired
10 to support and help arts poor schools to meet state's
11 instructional requirements in the arts and expanded
12 professional development opportunities for teachers
13 including the new crop of pre-k teachers. Quality
14 instruction in the arts provides a wide array of
15 social and academic benefits, preparing students for
16 college, career and life. However, more work needs
17 to be done to fully close the access and equity gap.
18 So we ask you to ensure that the full 23 million is
19 committed to this Fiscal Year 16 budget. Thank you
20 very much.

21
22 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. I was
23 very glad to see that that was included in part of
24 the new mayor's initiatives. You also had a big part
25 to do with that. So, I want to thank you for your

people throughout New York City and to improve outcomes for disconnected and justice involved youth. The Center for Court Innovation has developed multiple programs in an effort to work with disconnected and justice involved youth, working to provide them with resources and opportunities that lead to healthy and productive lives at our youth and community justice centers in Staten Island, in Brownsville, in Harlem. The Justice Community Plus Program provides employment readiness, workforce development services for youth exposed to community violence. It's designed to emphasize soft skills while providing participants with resume help, interview preparation and off-site internships. In Queens and in Staten Island at our Youth Justice Centers, the Alternative to Detention Programs, Quest and Ready, respectively, provide intense supervision along with after school programming for youth with cases pending in Family Court. These programs emphasize education providing participants with support related to school placement, engagement and discipline. The year round after school components are organized around social/emotional learning principles, interacting effectively with others, how

to properly navigate the world. Programming includes homework help, structured recreational activities, educational and vocational workshops and cognitive behavioral and skill building group work. The City Council support has been invaluable to the success of the Center for Court Innovation, helping us to maintain core operations and launch new initiatives at our demonstration projects throughout the city. This year we seek the Council's support in continuing to increase access to educational resources and opportunities for disconnected and justice involved youth as well as additional support for our critical new initiatives which are focused on youth diversion, police community youth relations and enhanced access to equal and fair justice for the city's most vulnerable citizens. And we've already begun this work. At the Brownsville Community Justice Center, police youth community dialogues are regularly convened. These unscripted conversations among teens, officers and residents help to build trust and understanding and they advance common goals. In Staten Island where I work, a new program, the Neighborhood Youth Justice Council brings young people together with community members and justice

1 stakeholders to design and implement projects, not
2 just to talk about police community dynamics, but
3 actually to create positive change. And with the
4 Council's help, we hope to expand our police youth
5 dialogue work to all of our youth and community
6 justice centers, creating these neighborhood youth
7 justice councils in neighborhoods like Queens, East
8 Harlem and other communities. The Center for Court
9 Innovation looks forward to continuing to work with
10 the City Council to increase access to educational
11 resources and opportunities for young people
12 throughout the city to reduce truancy, to improve
13 school safety and improve outcomes for disconnected
14 and justice involved youth. We respectfully urge you
15 to continue to support our work, and I thank you
16 again for the opportunity to speak.

18 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Just, I want to ask
19 quickly. You said you are seeking the Council's
20 support in the amount of 750--775,000. Is that what
21 we currently give you?

22 BETH BRODERICK: No, it's an increase.
23 As I mentioned, we have a couple of new critical
24 initiatives, including the police youth dialogues
25

that I was just describing, and so that number reflects the new initiatives.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And what are we giving you now? How much of an increase is it? Do you know?

BETH BRODERICK: I believe that it's closer to 400,000.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Four hundred thousand now, okay. You get any anti-gun money?

BETH BRODERICK: Yes. So, some of the money that the center received last year was through specific line items, and those, some of that is for our SOS programming in the South Bronx, in Bed-Stuy and in Crown Heights. Some of it is a direct line through the anti-violence initiatives for the Justice Community Plus programs which I described, and some of that was directly to the center which funded some of the core operations.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, good. Alright, that's what we wanted to know. Thank you. Max?

MAX AHMED: Good afternoon. Thank you. Before I begin my testimony I want to appreciate you bringing up the school support structure and the need for translation and interpretation supports for our

1
2 parents as well as Council Member Chin. We were very
3 pleased to hear that was brought up with the
4 Chancellor, and I was here for that. And thank you
5 so much for hosting this hearing. Also, if I seem a
6 bit drained, it's not because of the time, I'm
7 actually on a hunger strike because the education
8 budget or the state budget does not reflect the Dream
9 Act, which we really hope would include a pathway to
10 college access for immigrant students. So, please
11 forgive me if that--

12 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: [interposing] Max,
13 did you say you're currently on a hunger strike?

14 MAX AHMED: Yes, that's correct. That's--

15 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: [interposing] How
16 long have you been on the hunger strike?

17 MAX AHMED: We started yesterday, and
18 it's going to go until the budget, the state budget,
19 is announced on April 1st.

20 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: How many are joining
21 you?

22 MAX AHMED: We've gotten about 50 people
23 joining, about 30 New York City and folks from across
24 the state as well.
25

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Are these young people?

MAX AHMED: These are, yeah, young people mostly.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So, I--when I was Immigration Chair I attended a finale, I guess, of the hunger strike at St. Peter's, I think it was. I really admire you for doing that, you know, and all the people. Good luck with all that.

MAX AHMED: Thank you. Good afternoon. Thank you to members of the Council and to Chairman Dromm for his continued leadership for immigrant communities. My name is Max Ahmed, and I'm the Senior Associate of Education Advocacy at the New York Immigration Coalition. We are an umbrella advocacy and policy organization with nearly 200 members from New York State and we aim to achieve a fairer and more just society that values the contributions of immigrants and extends opportunity to all. As part of this work, we convene an educational collaborative of grassroots immigrant organizations, policy and legal organizations and practitioners. Together, we fight to increase English language learners and immigrant student's

1 access to a quality education and to expand
2 opportunity for parent, for their parents to be
3 engaged. As you know, there's a serious need to
4 improve translation and interpretation services for
5 immigrant parents. A lot of that was discussed in
6 the panels that came before me. There are some
7 specifics that I won't go into here. We strongly
8 support the additional funding for Language Line
9 Interpretation Services that Council Member Chin
10 brought up, and we recognize that much more needs to
11 be done to support these--to support students and the
12 access for parents. We also support helping parents
13 better understand their right to language assistance
14 services through the awareness campaign, but I want
15 to focus my testimony and my time here more on the
16 bigger issue that schools and other divisions within
17 the DOE are not presently aware of, their obligations
18 or how to provide quality language access to parents.
19 Much more has to be done beyond the modest budget
20 increase to address the very serious problems
21 parents' experience, and the DOE must seize a
22 critical opportunity now to dramatically improve the
23 situation. They must ensure that each newly expanded
24 superintendent office has a language access
25

1 coordinator who goes out into the district, sees how
2 schools are doing with language access, provides
3 needed support, and ensures that parents are getting
4 quality services that meet their needs. Right now,
5 there are only two people to do the job, to go out
6 and serve 1,700 schools with these support services,
7 and that just does not work. We cannot miss this
8 opportunity to better engage immigrant parents. And
9 finally, last year, 13 million in new funding was
10 provided for English language learners and these
11 funds were largely supposed to expand field support
12 staff that would go out and support schools. We need
13 more transparency regarding the use of these funds as
14 we don't currently know whether that, those funds
15 were used or how they were used. We thank the
16 Council for the opportunity to testify in support of
17 these funds, and we look forward to working with you
18 and the DOE to implement these recommendations.
19 Thank you.

20
21 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. Did you
22 have a testimony?

23 WENDY CHAPMAN: Hi, thank you. Am I the
24 last for the day? I hope for your sake. My name's
25 Wendy Chapman. Today I'm here on behalf of Build

1 School Now. We're a volunteer organization that
2 started a couple of years ago as a result of PS 150,
3 which is downtown almost being closed. We moved out
4 of the neighborhood because of overcrowding. There
5 was thoughts of turning it into a pre-k or a
6 kindergarten center, and Margaret Chin as well as
7 others helped keep the school open, and the good news
8 is I can say that we actually won a national Blue
9 Ribbon Award this year, and Margaret brought our
10 students in and we were recognized in this chamber,
11 and it was a joyous day for all. I'm here today
12 because I wanted to talk a little bit about the
13 situation in Community Board One with building
14 schools. I want to thank the Council, especially
15 Margaret Chin for advocating, approving and funding a
16 456 seat school to help ease overcrowding downtown.
17 While the money is currently in the city budget,
18 there seems to be no plans to site and build this
19 much needed school in CB1. We hope that the City
20 Council working with our elected officials and local
21 leaders will help turn this school into a reality by
22 continuing to press the Department of Education
23 School Construction Authority into action. As most
24 of you know, CB1 is one of the fastest growing
25

neighborhoods in New York City, and some would say within the world. Some areas in CBI are experiencing an almost 250 percent population growth in the last 10 years according to the latest census. This would be the financial district, which doesn't currently have a school in the neighborhood. New residential construction continues at a record clip with new story lines appearing in the local press every month announcing a new mega residential tower. The DOE's School Construction Authority has overseen the building of several new schools, but it isn't enough. The DOE itself acknowledges the need for 1,000 new seats downtown. They acknowledged this a couple years ago in a public meeting. Eric Greenleaf [sp?] of Sheldon Silvers Overcrowding Taskforce estimates that that need is at least 1,300. Additionally, the mayor's new pre-k for all program, which is wonderful, adds a lot more pressure for school space in Community Board One. Our public schools in Community Board One are bursting at the seams. If the new 456 seat school was approved and sited today, it would take roughly five years to build and would be overcrowded the day it opened. We need to act fast and we need to be creative to tackle this new

1
2 issue. Build Schools Now, and again, we're just a
3 few parent volunteers, have partnered with the Pratt
4 Graduate Architecture School to identify new school
5 sites in CB1. In December, we presented this work to
6 the Overcrowding Taskforce, and we asked the School
7 Construction Authority at that meeting to be more
8 transparent and partner with us to help solve this
9 very difficult problem to find school space. We
10 certainly know that we live in the most crowded and
11 expensive areas in the world, but to date, we're
12 still in the dark if anything was done with the work
13 that we presented at the Overcrowding Taskforce with
14 the School Construction Authority, and we just ask
15 that you help us in that quest. Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much.
17 That is very eye opening news to me. If you live in
18 this building that they built over across the street
19 on the other side of City Hall near Pace [sic]. I
20 can't think of the name of that--

21 WENDY CHAPMAN: [interposing] Yeah, that's
22 the Gary Building that the Spruce School was in, but
23 it's overcrowded. Every school in this area is
24 overcrowded. They can't keep Pace. And I don't know
25 if you know, but Margaret Chin would know this, but

1 the Howard Hughes Corporation just announced that
2 they have bought air rights and they plan on--I don't
3 think the plans are drawn up yet, but it's very
4 possible that they'll build the tallest residential
5 tower in New York City. And that will again be in an
6 area that currently is--doesn't have enough school
7 seats. So, it's wonderful that we have the Pecsub
8 [sic] School as the newest, but the pre-k seats that
9 are going to take any, you know, classrooms that are
10 there, that's great. They'll be temporary, but you
11 know, long term--you have to start today, because it
12 takes so long to build a school.

14 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So where's the Howard
15 Hughes Corporation want to build this? Is it South
16 Street [sic] Seaport [sic]?

17 WENDY CHAPMAN: Just outside that area,
18 yes.

19 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: They own a lot of
20 property there.

21 WENDY CHAPMAN: Yes. Which, you know,
22 devel--I don't want to pick on them, because there's
23 a lot of other developments going on as well in our
24 neighborhood. The way the city works, and maybe this
25 is a longer term issue, is that developers are

1 converting all these office towers into residential,
2 you know, facilities, but there's no triggers,
3 because they just have the as-of-right to build their
4 building. They don't contribute to any school pool or
5 any parks pool, and they advertise that they should--
6 you should move to our neighborhood because we have
7 great public schools, and we do, and we're very
8 blessed. A lot of the issues and the problems I
9 heard today, you know, we don't experience them quite
10 as much, but the wait lists in this neighborhood are
11 extremely long, and the way the Kindergarten Connect
12 has changed the system, the wait list problem
13 actually is a lot less transparent than it used to
14 be, but the year before, there was 149 wait list on
15 the kindergarten for downtown. Now, you don't see
16 that anymore because it's hidden a little bit more,
17 but the overcrowding is still a problem.

18
19 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Just to let you know,
20 too, I represent Jackson Heights and Elmhurst.

21 WENDY CHAPMAN: Queens is definitely
22 right up there with this community, and the northern
23 part of Staten Island is also having huge
24 overcrowding. So, Pratt Institute--
25

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: [interposing] And that's just in the overcrowding, but in the development in overcrowded, the areas that are already overcrowded.

WENDY CHAPMAN: That's right. That's right. And getting new schools built. The thing that we're excited about right now is that we have a parent who actually is a public school parent are PS 276 who is the head of the Graduate Architecture School of Design, and he is having his graduate architecture students as their project to do city planning to look at Community Board One and find sites to build a public school and build a theoretical school, and that's what we've been working on. It's real exciting to have the best and the brightest at Pratt partnering on this front, and I think they could do it in other neighborhoods too, but the School Construction Authority, you know, I understand is very leery of partnering with us. But I think if--because we're working with the Pratt Architecture School, it's a different situation. And we're going to be having--Pratt is going to be hosting--I just found out today, I haven't invited anyone yet on the Overcrowding Taskforce. April 23rd

1
2 at 12:30 out at Pratt's campus in Brooklyn we're
3 going to be having a panel discussion about some of
4 these findings that the students have come up with
5 and some of their ideas and inviting in the municipal
6 arts society, other architecture programs, city
7 planners, elected officials, you know, whoever wants
8 to come to try and say this is a hard problem to
9 solve everywhere and we have to be really creative.
10 So, I hope you come.

11 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Well, thank you. I
12 will look and see if I can. You do have the best
13 Council Member representing your district.

14 WENDY CHAPMAN: I agree.

15 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I will admit that.
16 And she certainly has a lot of stick-to-it-tiveness
17 [sic] because she's been here with us the whole day.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: We did ask
19 President Grillo, and when I told her about the
20 suggestions of the site, she didn't know about it.
21 So, she has to check with her real estate section
22 because she wasn't at the meeting. So her staff has
23 not brought to her attention. So we'll make sure
24 that she knows--
25

1
2 WENDY CHAPMAN: [interposing] That is
3 very clear that I actually think it's a systemic
4 problem. We have been trying to talk with anyone and
5 everyone. We keep showing up like a bad penny to any
6 meeting that's a public meeting. I think the School
7 Construction Authority is very uninterested in
8 partnering with parents in any way, and I think it's
9 a situation right now where they do their work on a
10 sub-district level, but the problems that are
11 happening in very specific community boards, they get
12 blended out in the reports that they send to the
13 city, and those crisis situations that are happening
14 in neighborhoods like the Financial District just get
15 blended away when they report it in to something
16 larger.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: But we'll make sure
18 that she gets the information.

19 WENDY CHAPMAN: Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Well, I thank you all
21 for coming in. You are really great to have stayed
22 throughout this whole hearing, and I thank you and
23 congratulate you, and with that I will adjourn this
24 meeting at 6:06 p.m.

25 [gavel]

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

377

C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date April 16, 2015